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Unfazed Santos explains DPL's stance. PAGE 3

Hafa Adai!

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KIMBERLY B. ESMORES/
Tourist go through security at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport before they board their flights.

Chamber appeals to USDOT on China flight cap exemption

» **'Total business revenue declined by $1B between 2019 and 2022'**

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
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REPORTER

The Saipan Chamber of Commerce has written directly to U.S Department of Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg in support of the Commonwealth Ports Authority's efforts to have the CNMI

See CHAMBER on Page 4

DPS on hunt for individuals who robbed man at gunpoint

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
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REPORTER

The Department of Public Safety is currently on the hunt for three people who robbed a man at gunpoint at a San Antonio beach last Sunday. This comes as the department is also on high alert after a string of robberies over the weekend.

DPS assistant chief of police and acting spokesperson Simon T. Manacop said DPS responded to a string of robberies in different villages—San Antonio, Garapan, and Capital Hill—over the

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KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
File photo of San Antonio Beach behind the Francisco M. Sablan Middle School where the alleged robbery occurred last Sunday.

'We need to start preparing for the tourists that are coming in'

By CHRYSTAL MARINO
chrystal_marino@saipantribune.com
CORRESPONDENT

In an effort to promote safe communities, safe villages, and a clean island, the Saipan Mayor's Office is sustaining its "Adopt-A-Place" program and is working on the implementation of both the Neighborhood Watch program and the farm-to-table program.

Saipan Mayor Ramon Blas "RB" Camacho, who disclosed his office's upcoming community projects last Thursday, said he has already

See TOURISTS on Page 4

Aldan

'Gov't overly bloated, spends too much'

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

The CNMI government is overly bloated and it spends too much, according to Rep. Vincent S. Aldan (Ind-Saipan), who suggests cutting the government to size and scaling back its expenses.

During the miscellaneous portion

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INSIDE

BUSINESS
Local sneakerheads and those who just want decent shoes for everyday wear don't necessarily have to buy online anymore.
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NATION
Rep. Jim Jordan has such a reputation as a political brawler that former House Speaker John Boehner once said he'd never met someone "who spent more time tearing things apart."
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WORLD
More than a million people have fled their homes in the besieged Gaza Strip in the past week.
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Local

SS, SSI recipients will get COLA increase in 2024

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Thousands of Social Security and Supplemental Security Income recipients in the Marianas can look forward to a 3.2% increase in their Cost of Living Allowance in 2024, according to Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (D-MP).

Sablan

As of April 2023, there are 4,661 individuals in the Marianas who are recipients of SS and SSI, according to Sablan in his e-kilili newsletter over the weekend.

For SS beneficiaries, the higher payments will start in January 2024, while for SSI the increase begins with the Dec. 29, 2023, payment.

The delegate said this is also good news for the Marianas because this federal benefit contributes more than $46 million to the CNMI economy each year.

"Still, we could do better," said Sablan, adding that he is a co-sponsor of H.R. 4583 or the Social Security 2100 Act that would base the annual COLA on the consumer price index for the elderly (CPI-E) to reflect the costs of prescription drugs and other expenses the man'amko (senior citizens) face.

» 'SS, SSI benefits contribute over $46M for the CNMI economy each year'

H.R. 4583 also seeks to protect SS system and improve benefits for current and future generations.

Sablan said the Social Security 2100 Act would also increase the base benefit for the first time in more than 50 years and repeal the Windfall Elimination Provision that lowers benefits for many who receive a pension from the Northern Marianas Retirement Fund.

House approves bill that gives Legislature access to Executive Branch's financial info

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

The House of Representatives passed Thursday a bill that gives the Legislature access to the Executive Branch's financial information for budgeting, appropriation, and expenditure oversight.

House members adopted during a session the Ways and Means Committee's report that recommends the passage of House Bill 23-49. All 19 House members present later voted "yes" to pass the legislation. Rep. Patrick H. San Nicolas (R-Tinian) was absent but excused from the session.

Rep. Marissa Renee Flores (Ind-Saipan) introduced the legislation last May 10. The bill was subsequently referred to the Ways and Means Committee and the Special Committee on Federal Assistance and Disaster-Related Funding, both chaired by Rep. Ralph N. Yumul (Ind-Saipan).

According to the committee report, members of the Legislature must have access to accurate and current data or reports related to budgeting, appropriations, and expenditures in order for them to make informed financial decisions and help them evaluate different alternatives.

Flores

The committee believes it will improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the annual budget process, which will ultimately lead to enhanced transparency and accountability.

Under the legislation, the governor shall provide the House speaker and Senate president for use by Legislative Bureau fiscal analysts and any other designees access to the official electronic financial and accounting application.

Such access may be limited to functions used for viewing or generating data or reports related to budgeting, appropriations, and expenditures.

In addition, members and employees of the Legislature shall participate in training in the use of the application for oversight of the budget, appropriation, and expenditures.

The committee said this legislation will ensure accountability, increase financial transparency, and help members of the Legislature evaluate different alternatives when making informed financial decisions.

Flores stated in the bill that the Legislature in the past has depended upon the timely and accurate presentation of data and reports from the Executive Branch to make predictions on revenues and spending. The Legislature has recently discovered that such information may be unreliable, Flores said.

She said the Executive Branch now uses a modern financial and accounting software application (Munis) through a contract with Tyler Technologies to maintain current data and reports on revenue and spending. Flores said that same application provides instant data and reports for all types of financial and accounting needs.

She said this bill extends transparency by providing guaranteed access to Munis, without any middleman limiting or changing the data or reports, for the Legislature in order to make accurate and timely decisions related to budgeting, appropriations, and expenditures.

Unfazed Santos explains DPL's stance

By CHRYSTAL MARINO
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CORRESPONDENT

Unflustered by Saipan Mayor Ramon Blas "RB" Camacho's criticisms against her, Department of Public Lands Secretary Teresita A. Santos cited what's stated in quarrying permits and the CNMI Constitution to explain the limits of what Camacho could ask of quarrying companies operating on Saipan.

Santos

At the same time, Santos said that DPL's interpretation of a section of the Temporary Occupancy Agreement, or TOA, "has not changed since [March 2017], and DPL sees no basis to vary from it today."

That essentially meant, Santos said, that this is contrary to Camacho's claim that quarrying companies must contribute an unlimited amount of materials—both raw and processed materials—for free to the Saipan Mayor's Office. She said the permit only provides that quarrying firms have to give only 100 cubic yards of coral or raw materials to the mayor's office. Anything beyond that must be paid for.

Camacho also wants free use of quarry operators' equipment. Santos said that is outside the scope of the permit granted to quarry operators.

In an official statement Santos issued last Oct. 13, a copy of which was also sent to Gov. Arnold I. Palacios, she said the Department of Public Lands has been notified of Camacho's position that quarrying companies cannot invoice him for quarried materials provided to the Office of the Mayor of Saipan.

DPL's understanding, Santos said, is that Camacho's position is based on his reading of a specific TOA.

"DPL has closely reviewed the TOA, as well as prior correspondence and memoranda from DPL interpreting the TOA, and has thoughtfully considered DPL's statutory and constitutional obligations to collect revenue from the management and disposition of public lands, and has determined that there must be some limits on the public benefit contribution required by the TOA," said Santos.

She noted that former DPL secretary Marianne Concepcion-Teregeyo notified the Saipan Mayor's Office on March 16, 2017, that it can obtain coral materials from public land quarry sites for up to a volume of 100 cubic yards, on the condition that the Saipan Mayor's Office would be responsible "for any and all cost of heavy equipment rentals for the extraction, loading, and delivery on the quarry site associated with its projects."

She said this "upholds DPL's statutory and constitutional obligations to collect revenue from the management and disposition of public lands and remit funds to the Marianas Public Land Trust..."

Santos noted that requiring quarry operators to provide an unlimited amount of materials to government agencies "would significantly reduce" revenues DPL can collect from permittees and would also reduce the amount of funds to be remitted to MPLT.

"Therefore, as stated in my July 11, 2023 letter to you regarding this issue, DPL interprets Article 11 [of the TOA] to require the quarry operator to provide 100 cubic yards of coral or raw materials to each government agency, including the Office of the Mayor of Saipan, for roadway projects and other public purposes. In total, this will allow the Office of the Mayor of Saipan access to a total of 600 cubic yards of coral or raw material per year (100 cubic yards per year from each of six public land quarry permittees)."

She restated that government agencies must be responsible "for all costs associated with the extraction, loading, and delivery from the quarry site to the project site. In addition, processed materials are excluded from the public benefit requirement and will be subject to charges by the permittee."

Camacho had complained that Santos is blocking his office's efforts to fix secondary roads on Saipan and had called for people to sign a petition for her ouster.

HOUSE SESSION FERDIE DE LA TORRE
Members of the House of Representatives review some documents during their regular session on Thursday. Among the bills that the House passed was a bill that seeks to establish an excise tax for betel nut/areca nut and lime mix. The House also passed a legislation which would provide the Legislature with access to the Executive Branch's financial information for budgeting, appropriation, and expenditure oversight.

Ayuyu's goal is to leave CPA operationally, financially in better position

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

As a newly appointed member of the Commonwealth Ports Authority board, businessman Jose C. Ayuyu's goal is to leave CPA operationally and financially in a better position than when he first joined it.

At a confirmation hearing Friday before the Senate Committee on Executive Appointments and Government Investigations, Ayuyu said he would also like to see the CPA board and its manager work more closely with the governor.

Ayuyu was appointed to the CPA board to represent Saipan and Northern Islands.

Ultimately, Ayuyu said, the governor will have to answer to the people who elected him to office.

"This is my observation not here only in Saipan but in Guam where, once board of directors are put in place, they tend to forget that they have to answer to the people for what they do," he said.

Ayuyu said he brings to the CPA board his management experience in running efficient organizational operations.

He said he does understand the kind of backbone needed to operate CPA.

"The key to the success for CPA operations is really the person in charge of CPA," he pointed out.

Ayuyu said financial knowledge is an area where he is very strong. He said the financial condition problem of the CNMI government is across the board.

Ayuyu

"It is just that we [have to be] willing to make the sacrifice and take a second look at how we're doing things. Maybe there may be different ways of doing it and become more efficient," Ayuyu said.

As for his human resources skills, having employed hundreds of employees means that is an area where he takes a special interest, he said.

On the legal side, Ayuyu said he understands how lawyers work and the need to monitor their activities on a regular basis, making sure CPA is well represented at reasonable costs.

Ayuyu grew up in Chalan Kanoa. He is currently the president and chief executive officer of McDonald's of Saipan and Guam.

He said he is semi-retired now as he is currently transitioning his businesses to his son, Joe Ayuyu Jr.

Ayuyu has other business interests in real estate rentals of apartments and commercial buildings.

He said their company employs close to 500 employees—over a hundred on Saipan and over 400 in Guam.

Ayuyu has been in business for about 30 years not counting his experience with Bank of Guam, Hakubutan, and other private companies.

Former senator Steve King Mesngon and retired U.S. Army command major sergeant Dolores Pangelinan Kiyoshi also appeared before the committee Friday for their confirmation hearing.

Palacios appointed Mesngon and Kiyoshi to the CPA board representing Rota, and Tinian and Aguiguan, respectively.

All three received overwhelming support from the community for their nomination to the CPA board.

Oscar M. Babauta, who is the special assistant for administration, said Ayuyu is a former president of Chalan Kanoa District 3.

He said Ayuyu is a professional with over 45 years of services in both the government and private sector, is an accomplished manager, and a business leader within the community.

Babauta said Mesngon is a former senator of the 19th and 20th legislatures and, most recently, is the deputy commissioner for the Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services.

Babauta said Kiyoshi honorably served the U.S. government 30 years of military service in the Army and achieved the rank of command sergeant major.

Man pleads not guilty to involvement in smuggling over $1.2M worth of meth

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
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REPORTER

A man who was arrested last month for alleged involvement in smuggling over $1.2 million worth of methamphetamine to the CNMI has pleaded not guilty.

Yang Liang pleaded not guilty before U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona last week.

Following his arraignment, Yang was remanded back to the custody of the U.S. Marshals Service, where he will remain detained pending further court proceedings.

Yang's jury trial is set to start on Dec. 5, 2023.

Yang is currently facing charges of conspiracy to possess with intent to distribute methamphetamine.

According to the complaint against him, Customs officer Shota Castro was inspecting a parcel addressed to P.O. Box 10003 9 PMB 481-B on Sept. 23, 2023, during a routine inspection of mail at the Chalan Kanoa post office and identified four boxes containing silver lava lamps inside the parcel. He noticed that one of the lava lamps appeared to have been tampered with and there was a dry crystal-like substance on the lamp.

Castro then conducted a field test of the substance, which yielded a positive result for methamphetamine. The parcel and contents were then turned over to the Saipan Customs Contraband Enforcement Team and the Drug Enforcement Administration.

Following the discovery, DEA special agent Kirk F. Johns stated that a U.S. postal inspector applied for a warrant with the U.S. District Court for the installation of a tracking device inside the parcel, which the court granted.

John said that, prior to the discovery, Yang visited a mail service shop and inquired about a parcel. Yang allegedly provided a tracking number and cell number for the mail service to call when the parcel arrived.

In addition, Yang inquired about a parcel that was not addressed to him.

On Sept. 27, an unidentified male referred to as "AA" entered the mail service shop and asked to check post box 481-B. AA allegedly didn't have the key to the box so Yang came and provided it to him. AA received the two boxes that had been discovered to contain "ice."

As AA began to open the parcel with scissors, Yang rushed out of the mail service shop, followed closely by federal agents.

Later, AA took the two parcels to Yang and when Yang picked up the box and placed it in his car, both men were detained by authorities.

Speaking through an interpreter, Yang told investigators he was expecting a bow and arrow from his friend on Guam.

Yang said his friend Batu, who was in Guam, informed him on Sept. 23, 2023, that he should expect packages with a phone, cup, crossbow, lantern, and passport. Yang stated that Batu provided him with tracking numbers for these packages.

Yang said Batu told him how to receive the packages and instructed him to deliver the package with lanterns based on follow-up instructions.

Yang told officers he was tricked into receiving the parcels, not knowing they contained drugs. However, investigators noted they had not informed Yang that methamphetamine was discovered inside either package.

DPS

From page 1

weekend. It was the San Antonio robbery where a man was held at gunpoint.

Manacop said police received a call at around 8:48pm on Sunday, Oct. 15, about a robbery at the Pacific Islands Club Saipan in San Antonio.

Preliminary investigation revealed that the male victim was robbed at gunpoint while parked at the San Antonio Beach side behind the Francisco M. Sablan Middle School.

In an interview with the victim, he claimed that a woman known to him had called him earlier that evening, asking him to buy cellphone load for her. The victim agreed to purchase the load and met the woman at the parking lot of PIC to give it to her.

Later, as the victim and the woman were parked at San Antonio Beach, she allegedly demanded money from him, to which the victim claimed he did not have.

A few minutes later, the victim said a car parked behind his car and a male and female exited and approached him on the driver side demanding money from him.

However, when the victim told them that he did not have money, the male suspect allegedly pointed a handgun at the victim's head and again demanded for money.

The victim then took out his wallet, which the female suspect grabbed. At the same time, the female who was inside the victim's vehicle with the victim grabbed the victim's Samsung Galaxy cellphone and the key to his car. She then exited the car and got into the suspects' car, described as a dark colored SUV. All three fled the scene.

The victim told police he was later able to start his car and drove to PIC where he reported the incident.

Although the victim was unharmed, the suspects were able to steal his wallet containing $300, his CNMI driver's license, a Discover credit card, and a Bank of Hawaii debit card.

No arrests have been made in this incident and DPS is asking the community's assistance in closing the case.

"If anyone has information about this incident, they may call the DPS Criminal Investigation Divisionat 670-664-9042, DPS headquarters at 670-664-9001 or the Crime Stoppers Hotline at 670-234-7272 if they wish to remain anonymous. DPS also encourages the public to call the emergency line '911' to report a crime or emergency," Manacop said.

DPS is also asking the community for help in closing two other robbery cases—the robbery case at the Pacific Postal Plus in Garapan and a break-in at a residence on Capital Hill involving two men.

The two men allegedly broke into the Capital Hill residence in the early hours of Oct. 15 where an 84-year-old man was sleeping. The two men, described as masked men, allegedly held the elderly man at knifepoint and rummaged his house and were able to steal about $650 and some personal items.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Chinese tourists frequented Managaha Island when they came to the CNMI in record numbers before the COVID-19 pandemic.

CHAMBER

From page 1

be exempted from the current cap in China flights.

Chamber president Joe C. Guerrero recently wrote Buttigieg to express the Chamber's support of CPA's application for a CNMI exemption from the current cap in China flights as established under China Order part 213. That order limits the number of flights from China to the entire United States. Starting near the end of October 2023, that limit is at only 24 flights a month. That includes flights to the CNMI, Guam, and other U.S. territories.

"The Saipan Chamber of Commerce, the most significant association of private businesses in the CNMI, wholeheartedly support[s] the CPA's application for exemption. Our plea is simple: granting this exemption will pave the way for the revival of the CNMI's economy. We urge you to consider this application favorably, recognizing its immense potential to bolster economic activity and improve the lives of countless residents in our community. We remain hopeful for a positive outcome that will benefit the CNMI and the many hard-working Americans who seek to live productive and successful lives here at home," he said.

Guerrero explains in his letter that an exemption from the China flight cap is essential to the CNMI's economic recovery.

"We believe that granting this exemption is necessary for the economic recovery and sustainable growth of our region," he said.

Guerrero states that many local businesses continue to grapple with the repercussions of the COVID-19 pandemic, most notably the massive decline in revenue seen in the past three years.

"The CPA's application offers a comprehensive insight into the CNMI's unique economic landscape, especially in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic. The application underscores the challenges our local businesses face, many of which continue to grapple with the repercussions of the pandemic," he said.

To emphasize the gravity of the CNMI's situation, Guerrero cited statistics on the state of the CNMI's private sector according to the U.S. Census Bureau's Economic Census. That census, he said, showed that the CNMI had 1,719 businesses in 2019.

"By 2021, we witnessed a sharp decline of 13% in the total number of businesses across all sectors due to the pandemic's devastating impact. These impacts have had repercussions across the economy.

"Between 2019 and 2021, total employment across CNMI businesses declined by 30.9%, and annual payroll paid to employees within the economy fell by 30%, resulting in a loss of $129 million in annual employee compensation compared to the year before the pandemic. The loss of income and ability to support consumption expenditures in the domestic economy will have continued ramifications to business revenue, employment opportunities and government tax receipts.

"In total, in utilizing available government data, we estimate that total business revenue declined by $1 billion between 2019 and 2022—or a decline of 38%," he added.

Essentially, Guerrero said, as pandemic-related restrictions on commercial activity have lifted throughout the CNMI and the world, the only constraint on the ability of the CNMI to recover from economic losses is the lack of a fuller recovery of its tourism sector.

"As of August 2023, total arrivals to the CNMI for fiscal year 2023 was 59% below [fiscal year] 2019 arrivals. The South Korean market has been the primary driver in the recovery of the tourism sector, but has only reached 74% of the pre-pandemic levels of arrivals for the market. The greatest inhibitor of tourism recovery is the lack of air service from China," he said.

Emphasizing the role of the China market to the overall economy, Guerrero reiterated what CPA previously shared: In fiscal year 2019, the CNMI's tourism sector catered to 186,141 tourists from China, while in the 11 months of data for fiscal year 2023, total arrivals from China was at 3,451.

"In perspective, the pre-pandemic levels of arrivals from China were greater than the total number arrivals in [fiscal year] 2023. If the CNMI were to recover the same proportion of arrivals from China as those witnessed in the South Korean market, total arrivals would have reached levels of arrivals signifying a recovery at 313,556, or only 26% below pre-pandemic arrivals. Recognizing the supreme role tourism arrivals have on the CNMI economy, along with the lack of alternatives to support wider business revenue and employment, the only avenue for economic recovery is increased effort to build back pre-pandemic tourism markets," he said.

BLOATED

From page 1

of a House of Representatives session last Thursday, Aldan said that, with all the problems the government is facing, he suggests a solution that he concedes might be unpopular—reduce the size of the government, reduce spending, and pay debts to vendors.

In taking on the role of a devil's advocate, he said, the solution doesn't just go for the Legislature, but goes for every government agency and branch.

He said one of the biggest things that he has found and is nothing new is that the government is overly bloated. "As much as I don't want to say it, it needs to be said," he said, adding that there's jobs outside of the government that need to be filled.

He said everybody that works for the government has to be responsible for everything the government owns—from paper to pen to staplers, and so on.

"And if we do hold ourselves accountable to make sure that all of those things are used properly, wisely, and responsibly, then maybe we could just save some money and we wouldn't have this big of a headache," Aldan said.

He said people need to start looking for jobs outside of the government, as the government cannot afford it.

People have to also understand that when they keep demanding for the government to provide some sort of service, that service is not free, he said.

"If you've got a big government, guess what? You're [going to] have a big taxing problem that nobody wants," he said.

Aldan said when the government pays its debt, then the vendors can pay their Business Gross Revenue Tax.

He underscored the need to reduce the government, but at the same time the public also has to stop demanding that the government do all kinds of things, because it costs money.

"And the only way the government makes money is by taxing, as much as we don't like it. The more you ask the government, the more the government is going to tax [you]," Aldan said.

TOURISTS

From page 1

spoken to two religious groups as he looks to partner with them on the Neighborhood Watch program.

"I've already met with two religious leaders, and forthcoming is a meeting with other religious leaders on island to see how we can work together to combat unacceptable activity within our community," Camacho said.

For the farm-to-table program, Camacho said they have already built around 30 garden tables, which will enable gardeners to plant garden beds on the tables while standing, instead of bending over.

Camacho said he had already sent some of the raised garden beds to the Center for Living Independently, and aims to donate some to the Office of Aging as well.

Camacho showed a garden of sugarcane his office is growing right outside their building in Susupe. He said that they are planning to move the batch of sugarcane to the Sugar King Park in Chinatown. "They're going to be planted up there at Sugar King [Park]…"

He said they plan to replant the sugarcane sometime this week. With all the history and monuments of sugar on the site, it'll be fitting to have sugarcane grow on Sugar King Park, he said. "We need to start preparing for the tourists that are coming in. …We need to work together to beautify the island because tourism is the major…financial resource for the government so we need to focus on these things—from beautifying the island to reduction of crime [and] fixing the roads. …We need to work together."

Benjamin appointed to VA Advisory Committee

James Kennedy Benjamin of the CNMI has been appointed to the Advisory Committee on U.S. Outlying Areas and Freely Associated States.

The Advisory Committee will advise and provide guidance to the Veterans Affairs secretary on matters relating to veteran needs. The committee was created with the passage of the National Defense Authorization Act of 2023 last year. According to Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan, H.R. 3730 was included in Section 5102 of the NDAA that created the advisory committee.

"I was honored to nominate a son of the Marianas and Micronesia, U.S. Army combat veteran James Kennedy Benjamin to represent the Northern Marianas on the advisory committee, and glad he recently got confirmation of his selection. Mr. Benjamin's knowledge of veteran needs in the Marianas will be invaluable to the VA secretary," said Sablan.

Benjamin has over 10 years of military service. He was deployed to Iraq and has served with the 302nd Quartermaster Company, 305th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment, and continues his service with the 9th Mission Support Command. "I am humbled and would like to express my gratitude for recommending me to serve the Marianas and the Freely Associated States Veterans in this capacity," Benjamin said. ***(PR)***

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

James Kennedy Benjamin of the CNMI, left, poses with Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (D-MP).

GMS Pure Love Daycare 1 and 2 bag Star Level 2 award

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

GMS Pure Love Daycare 1 and 2 staff pose for a group photo. The team recently was given a Star Level 2 award.

Last July 5 marked another GMS Pure Love Daycare 1 and 2 milestone. It was the most anticipated moment of all—the awarding of Star Level per child care center. Star levels are awarded to childcare centers that follow the guidelines for quality standards or QRIS. Quality Rating and Improvement System is a systemic approach to assess, improve, and communicate the level of quality in early and school-age care. This ensures that quality care is given to every child in each daycare facility.

Erlaine Evangelista of Evergreen Learning facilitated the debriefing session at the MSV Building in Chalan Kanoa. The session lasted for almost two hours, during which Evangelista did a rundown of all the progress and achievements of Pure Love Daycare's respective programs for ITERS, ECERS, and SACERS. Both PLDs 1 and 2 bagged the Star 2 award. Star Level 2 signifies that PLD 1 and 2 are on par when rendering childcare services.

Everybody was delighted and thankful for the results of the QRIS baseline, as all their sweat and hard work was finally validated. PLD director Milagros S. Songcuan was all teary-eyed and speechless as she congratulated everybody. She said she was so grateful to all of the PLD staff for their hard work and dedication in providing the best quality childcare service for their students and parents.

The attendees of the said event were PLD 1 and 2 staff, PLD director Milagros S. Songcuan, CCDF Program administrator Maribel Loste, and former CCDF secretary Maggie Sablan. ***(PR)***

CCR reports due on Oct. 30—OPA

The Office of the Public Auditor is reminding all reporting agencies that the Citizen-Centric Report for fiscal year 2023 is due on Oct. 30, 2023. All CCRs reports must be submitted to mail@opacnmi.com.

Failure to file may result in a penalty of $50 per day for first time offenses and $100 per day for second or subsequent offenses until the violation is cured.

The CCR is a four-page report that was created by the Association of Government Accountants as a way to simplify communication between the government and its citizens. The 20th NMI Legislature passed Public Law 20-83, which requires all CNMI government agencies to file a CCR.

This law requires CCR submissions by "every secretary, director, administrator, president or head of a Commonwealth agency, including line departments and agencies, autonomous and semiautonomous agencies, public corporations, the Mayor's Offices, Municipal Councils and boards and commissions." An electronic copy of the report shall be submitted to the Office of the Public Auditor and the presiding officers of the Legislature. Additionally, the report shall be posted on the website of the entity, the Office of the Governor, the Office of the Public Auditor, and the CNMI Legislature.

For more information, visit the OPA website at www.opacnmi.com or contact (670) 322-6481/2. ***(PR)***

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

GCC board of trustees meeting on Oct. 18

The Guam Community College board of trustees will hold its monthly board meeting on Wednesday, Oct. 18, 2023, at 1pm at Guam Community College in Room 112, Learning Resource Center (GCC Library), Building 4000.

All attendees are encouraged to wear a mask on the GCC campus.

Individuals requiring special accommodations, auxiliary aids, or service should contact (671)735-5641 ext. 5594/5597. ***(PR)***

Sign up for NANOWRIMO

NaNoWriMo—National Novel Writing Month—approaches. The challenge is to write a 50,000 word novel in thirty days. Why? Because each of us has a story to tell and why not?

NaNoWriMo is a great tool for getting it done!

1. NaNoWriMo gives you a deadline, which is a critical element to finishing anything, especially for procrastinators and writers.

2. Joining the challenge puts you in touch with tens of thousands of writers and opens a magic channel to unimaginable resources to help on the way.

3. November will come and go. For ordinary people, it will be like any other November. But if you take the NaNoWrimo challenge, at the end of the month, you'll have a first draft novel. You'll be a novelist! And it will feel very different—wonderful, exhilarating, astounding.

So find NaNoWriMo online and sign up. It's free. Keep checking the MarianasWritersMovement.org website for local news, tips and tricks, and write-in dates.

Joint the fun! ***(PR)***

New host family opportunities in FY 2024

The Saipan Mayor's Office announced an opportunity for community members to participate in its International Exchange Program by playing host to international students who will be visiting the CNMI in fiscal year 2024.

"We are actively seeking host families who are eager to provide a welcoming home for international students, fostering cultural exchange, and creating lifelong friendships," said a statement from the Saipan Mayor's Office. "Together, let's create memorable experiences and lifelong connections through the Saipan Mayor's Office International Exchange Program."

The news release did not indicate the nationalities of the visiting students, but they usually are from Japan.

For more information about the International Exchange Program or to express your interest in hosting, contact Hiroko Tenorio at (670)234-6208 or htenorio@mos.gov.mp or visit the saipanmayor.cnmi.gov website. ***(PR)***

Saipan Mayor's Office launches revamped website

The Saipan Mayor's Office announced that the it has taken a new step into the future with the launching of a new and improved website, saipanmayor.cnmi.gov, that went live last Oct. 1.

The revamped page has redesigned features and contains new and improved visuals and enables user-friendly navigation throughout the page. This revamped website presents a new and vibrant look and gives the user a better understanding on the different aspects of the Saipan Mayor's Office such as its programs and services.

You may access the Saipan Mayor's Office's new website at saipanmayor.cnmi.gov. Discover, engage, and stay informed with the Saipan Mayor's Office through its newly transformed online presence.

For any questions or more information, contact the Saipan Mayor's office at (670) 234- 6208. Office hours are Monday through Friday, from 7:30am to 4:30pm. The Saipan Mayor's Office is also open through lunch. ***(PR)***

JKPL calls on all trick-or-treaters

It's that time of the year and the Friends of the Joeten-Kiyu Public Library, Joeten-Kiyu Public Library, Northern Marianas Library Association, and all community partners invite everyone to join them for the 10th Annual Community Halloween Trunk-Or-Treat event.

Held every year, this popular free public event helps to promote and strengthen community partnership and engagement, fosters family bonding, and provides families with an alternative activity to trick-or-treating door-to-door. This spooktacular event is scheduled for Oct. 31, 2023 from 3:30pm to 6:30pm at the Joeten-Kiyu Public Library parking lot in Susupe.

Since 2012, thousands of children and adults have enjoyed hours of fun dressing up in spooktacular costumes and trick-or-treating at the Joeten-Kiyu Public Library parking lot. This year, the JKPL will have monetary prizes for the Best Family Halloween Costume Contest. Registration is required to participate in the costume contest. ***(PR)***

NMC grad leads juveniles toward brighter future

Working as a juvenile probation officer III under the CNMI Division of Youth Services, Rutha Mizutani-Tebuteb is an inspiring example of the many NMC alumni within the criminal justice field who are working to maintain the peace and safety of our islands.

Mizutani-Tebuteb graduated from NMC in 2003 with her Associates of Applied Science in Computer Applications and had also earned her Associates degree in Business Administration in 2005.

In addition to her Criminal Justice courses at NMC, she expanded her educational pursuits and obtained a Bachelor of Science degree in Criminal Justice from Texas A&M University-Central Texas in 2011.

Currently, Mizutani-Tebuteb works under DYS to help juveniles become productive citizens while minimizing their risk of further criminal behavior, as well as working with their families to ensure a holistic approach toward the best interest of the child.

"My primary role is to supervise juvenile offenders who are placed on probation as an alternative to incarceration or as part of their sentence," Mizutani-Tebuteb explained. "Probation conditions are set by the court, and my job is to ensure that juvenile offenders adhere to their conditions."

While reflecting on her time at NMC, she recalled the opportunities that the College has given her, "Because of my major, NMC afforded me the opportunity to intern with the U.S. Attorney's Office. During my internship I also gained valuable skills from professionals."

NMC

Rutha Mizutani-Tebuteb graduated from Northern Marianas College in 2003 with her Associates of Applied Science in Computer Applications and had also earned her Associates degree in Business Administration in 2005.

Mizutani-Tebuteb found that by choosing NMC, she was able to experience the comfort of home while simultaneously pursuing her college education.

"Why NMC? Because NMC offered a variety of courses that piqued my interest and most importantly, the college is accredited. We should be asking, 'why not NMC?'" she said.

Attending college while raising her first-born child, Tebuteb's educational journey is one filled with persistence, determination, as well as fond memories.

She recalled, "My favorite memory is graduating at NMC along with my husband with our close friends and family. Now, our first-born is a freshman at NMC—starting smart."

Additionally, Mizutani-Tebuteb remembered enjoying the many activities that NMC had to offer during her time as a student, such as Charter Day, Student Center activities, and meeting new friends.

"I would also like to acknowledge the instructors, counselors and the student lounge staff who made my college experience fun and worthwhile," she added. "They showed me that hard work, enthusiasm, and positive energy can take you to new heights."

Providing advice for current students, Mizutani-Tebuteb said, "Enjoy college to the fullest. Make the most of your college experience by having a positive attitude—good and bad experiences are always better than no experience."

"If you happen to be an intern like I was, learn as much as possible from your mentors and be proactive," she added.

Mizutani-Tebuteb thanks her parents and family, who have been her source of motivation throughout her educational journey. ***(NMC)***

USDA awards NMC $151K to modernize agricultural studies through virtual reality

The United States Department of Agriculture's National Institute for Food and Agriculture has recently awarded the Northern Marianas College $151,370 to enhance agricultural and food science education through the implementation of Virtual Reality (VR) technology.

This will help NMC expose faculty and students to agriculture and food science VR environments, enable students to participate in interactive VR labs, and assist in the creation of VR video content that highlights agriculture and food experiences in the CNMI.

Through interactive VR labs, this will leverage VR technology to provide faculty and students with immersive experiences in food and agriculture. Students will gain the opportunity to participate in experiments and simulations. This hands-on approach promises to enhance student engagement.

By granting students access to cutting-edge technology, NMC's VR education project aims to improve their learning experiences and inspire their interest in food and agriculture science. This initiative not only opens doors for students to explore exciting career opportunities in agriculture but also positions NMC as a pioneer in the use of VR technology in education.

"This will be a wonderful resource for our students and our community as a whole, and I want to commend our Distance Learning Education coordinator Will Hunter for leading our efforts to be forward-thinking as new technologies emerge in higher education and in regenerative learning," said NMC president Dr. Galvin Deleon Guerrero.

"I am thrilled and grateful to the USDA NIFA for providing this wonderful opportunity for us to implement VR technology into the learning environment at NMC. I have been an avid user of VR for many years and I am very excited to be able to share this experience with the students. This innovative project will expose faculty and students to new and exciting learning opportunities, while also giving us the resources to create VR content that we can also share," said NMC Distance Learning Education coordinator William Hunter.

This grant was awarded through the USDA NIFA's Distance Education Grant Program for Insular Areas. ***(NMC)***

NMC

Two Northern Marianas College students try out a virtual reality headset. The college recently received funding from the United States Department of Agriculture's National Institute for Food and Agriculture to enhance agricultural and food science education through the implementation of Virtual Reality technology.

Free NMC info session on Oct. 25

NMC

Participants of the last info session held by the Northern Marianas College speak with a college representative. NMC will be hosting another free info session on Oct. 25, 2023 at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center.

Northern Marianas College invites all community members looking to further their education to attend NMC's free information session regarding the upcoming Spring 2024 semester on Wednesday, Oct. 25, 2023.

The info session will be held at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center in Susupe, with doors opening at 5:30pm for registration. The session will cover topics that include financial aid options and the admissions process.

Participants of the info session will qualify to have their application and placement test fees waived for NMC's upcoming Spring 2024 semester, a savings of about $75.

Incoming students who have attended a Start Smart Seminar, Cash for College, or Climb Higher Seminar in the past year can avail of having their application and placement test fees waived for the Spring 2024 semester.

NMC offers several degree and certificate programs, including a Bachelor of Science in Education (Concentration in Early Childhood Education, Elementary Education, Rehabilitation and Human Services, or Special Education), Bachelor of Science in Business Management (Concentration in Accounting or without Concentration); Associate of Arts in Business, Associate of Applied Science in Business Administration (Emphasis in Accounting, Business Management, or Computer Applications), Associate of Applied Science in Hospitality Management, Associate of Arts in Liberal Arts (Emphasis in Education, Health and Physical Education, Pre-Engineering, Social Work, or without Emphasis), Associate of Science in Nursing, Associate of Science in Agriculture, Associate of Science in Natural Resource Management, Associate of Applied Science in Criminal Justice, and Associate of Science in Fire Science Technology. The certificate programs at NMC include Basic Law Enforcement, Business Management, Computer Applications, Early Childhood Education, Fire Science Technology, Hospitality Operations, Nursing Assistant, and Small Business Management.

NMC's Spring 2024 semester will begin on Ja. 16, 2024. A list of the classes that are offered can be found at www.marianas.edu. For additional information or inquiries, contact the Office of Admissions and Records at 237-6769/70/71/72 or email oar@marianas.edu. ***(NMC)***

5 additional villages complete Mawar Debris Cleanup

GUAM—The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers debris removal mission moves forward as contractors completed cleanup from residential rights of way in the villages of Barrigada, Chalan Pago Ordot, Mangilao, Mongmong-Toto-Maite and Yona.

The USACE mission conducts separation and removal of eligible typhoon related debris from residential properties. Teams go street by street through each village collecting everything from construction and demolition waste to vegetative debris from rights of way until the entire village has been cleared.

Debris Operations are currently ongoing in the following villages:

- Agat (Hagatna)
- Yigo

Once USACE contractors have made their rounds through a village, the local mayor is contacted and tours the village to ensure debris pick-up has been completed.

Debris Operations have been completed in the following villages:

- Agat (Hagatna)
- Agana Heights
- Asan (Asan-Maina)
- Barrigada
- Chalan Pago-Ordot
- Dededo
- Inarajan (Inalahan)
- Mangilao
- Merizo (Malesso')
- Mongmong-Toto-Maite
- Piti
- Sinajana
- Santa Rita (Santa Rita-Sumai)
- Tamuning
- Talofofo (Talo'fo'fo)
- Umatac (Humatak)
- Yona

Now that local mayors have signed off on debris removal in these 17 villages, USACE asks that any remaining debris including ineligible and hazardous waste be disposed of properly and not be set in the rights of way.

Areas that have been cleared continue to see debris being dumped by residents. Any new debris remaining after an area has been completed will be the residents' responsibility to dispose of.

Certain forms of ineligible debris may be taken to one of the three Guam Solid Waste Authority residential transfer stations in Harmon, Hagat, and Malojloj. Transfer station operation hours are Thursday through Monday from 9am to 5pm. A nominal fee is required for disposal of household trash.

Residents are urged to dispose of their solid waste properly. Illegal dumping is a violation of Guam law. In accordance with 10 GCA ¬ß51115(b), illegal dumping is subject to fines of up to $1,000 per day, per violation, along with the cleanup cost associated with the violation.

To view the Debris Mission Dashboard detailing current debris mission operations visit Guam Debris Mission DR4715-Dashboard (PUBLIC) (arcgis.com)

For an FAQ answering common questions about the debris mission visit: U.S. Army Corp of Engineers Debris Mission FAQ | FEMA.gov

For more information on proper debris separation visit

- Debris Removal Guidelines for Residential Property (fema.gov)
- Visit the following links for the latest information:
- Governor's Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/govlouguam
- GHS/OCD Website: https://ghs.guam.gov/
- GHS/OCD Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/GHSOCD/ ***(PR)***

The morning after Bolaven

By DR. PHILLIP DAUTERMAN
Special to the Saipan Tribune

On my drive to work during the morning of Typhoon Bolaven's passage in the Marianas I saw very little damage. One large tree went down on Middle Road in Garapan by the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. Large numbers of banana trees went down. On the road by the Old Japanese Prison, there are so many banana trees down you have to be careful driving that road.

I did not see damage to any standing structure.

PHOTOS BY DR. PHILLIP DAUTERMAN

GRMC launches 'CARE Heroes' Volunteer Program

DEDEDO, Guam—Guam Regional Medical City is now accepting applications for its new volunteer program, "CARE Heroes," which is set to launch by mid-October.

The volunteer program is open to the public for those at least 15 years of age or older. Volunteers interested in participating in the program, whether they are high school students seeking community hours or individuals looking to lend a hand, will need to meet the following requirements:

- Must have parental authorization (for volunteers ages 15-17)
- Must obtain court and police clearances
- Must undergo drug test screening (to be provided and coordinated by the GRMC Human Resources Office)
- Provide current immunization records (PPD, MMR, Hepatitis b, Flu and COVID-19 vaccinations)
- PPD must be current within 12 months. If positive PPD reactor, a copy of the applicant's chest x-ray must be provided.

Participating departments where volunteers will assist include Admin/Support, Human Resources, Learning Development/Clinical Education/Employee Health, Patient Experience/Customer Relations, Marketing & Communications, Materials Management, Admissions, Quality Management, Linen & Laundry/Housekeeping, Food Services, Clinical/Ancillary, Nursing Units, Nursing Administration, Specialty Clinics, Clinical Dietary, Radiology, Radiation Oncology, Patient Mobility Transport/Rehabilitation.

Volunteer applications are available on GMC's website at https://www.grmc.gu/icare-heroes/ and can be submitted to volunteer@grmc.gu. For all inquiries, please contact GRMC's Human Resources Department at (671) 645-5500, ext. 5689. ***(PR)***

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
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EDITORIAL

Claudia Goldin's Nobel is a win for women and men

Women have immense potential to make the entire world more prosperous—yet despite decades of progress, that potential is yet to be fully realized. Harvard Professor Claudia Goldin has spent her career illuminating not only the obstacles that women face but also how to overcome them. For these efforts, she is the richly deserving winner of the 2023 Nobel Memorial Prize in Economics.

Goldin is a trailblazer on multiple levels. Of the 93 economic laureates since the prize's inception in 1969, she's only the third woman (and the first to be recognized solo, without co-recipients). She was the first tenured female professor in the Harvard economics department. And at a time when leading academics focused on building elegant but often deeply flawed mathematical models of the economy, she stuck to the painstaking work of collecting and analyzing empirical data to establish the truth.

After studying the mechanisms of slavery and the cost of the American Civil War, she turned to the topic that would define her career: women and work. By parsing data going as far back as the late 18th Century, she discovered (among other things) that female labor-force participation doesn't necessarily increase with economic growth, and that education alone won't eliminate the gender pay gap. Thus, other policies are needed to help women and the economy reach their full potential. Depending on a country's situation, these might involve women's expectations, access to contraception, parenting roles or the flexibility of work arrangements.

Goldin's insights have helped guide policymakers' efforts to promote gender equality—which, if achieved, could add more than 50% to the economic output of some countries by expanding the labor force and better allocating human capital, according to one estimate. It could also boost incomes for both women and men. Yet adoption of even plainly beneficial measures, such as child-care subsidies, remains uneven—notably in the U.S., which last month allowed emergency pandemic-era child-care funding to expire, potentially leaving millions in the lurch.

Aside from her research, Goldin has sought to address a stark disparity in her own field: Women comprise the majority of undergraduate students, but only one in four economics majors. True to form, Goldin's initiative—which entails, for example, targeted information sessions and mentoring—is structured as a controlled experiment, to establish what actually works. Although the results have so far been mixed, it has boosted women's enrollment in economics in some colleges and provided others with valuable information on how best to proceed.

While Goldin often emphasizes how far women have come, her research also quantifies the struggles that remain. Women still earn less than men for the same work—particularly in high-paying professions such as law and finance, which require long hours and a lot of face time. By responsibly measuring the problem, she helps make further progress possible.

It will take more time for women to achieve true equity in the workplace. But when that happens, they and all who benefit from their contributions will to a crucial extent have Claudia Goldin to thank.

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WE'VE BEEN SAYING FOR YEARS THAT ISRAEL IS THREATENED...
IS A TARGET...
AND IS VULNERABLE.
DO YOU BELIEVE US NOW?
ISRAEL
MIKE SMITH
DIST. BY KING FEATURES SYNDICATE/WAC

Four myths exposed by the Hamas attack on Israel

By HAL BRANDS
Bloomberg Opinion

Hal Brands is a Bloomberg Opinion *columnist and the Henry Kissinger Distinguished Professor at Johns Hopkins University's School of Advanced International Studies.*

The horror unleashed by Hamas is only beginning. A terrorist group that killed at least 1,200 people in Israel last weekend is now endangering countless Palestinian lives, through its cynical practice of putting military capabilities in hospitals, schools and dense urban areas. But if shocks like the one Israel suffered have any upside, it's that they expose—and provide a chance to correct—the sloppy thinking that allowed them to happen in the first place. This attack highlights four intellectual failures in the recent approach to strategy by Israel and America alike.

The first is the search for technological solutions to vexing security problems. Israel, in the run-up to this crisis, placed its faith in high-tech defenses—such as the Iron Dome anti-missile system and a state-of-the-art security barrier—meant to keep Hamas contained. It relied on ubiquitous surveillance capabilities—radar coverage, sensors, electronic eavesdropping—to reveal the enemy's intent.

But signals intelligence couldn't pierce the fog of deception Hamas created by pretending to be pursuing détente with the Jewish state. Nor could it correct the damage created by political distraction and flawed assumptions: namely, the belief that Hamas was simply incapable of such a complex, impressive attack. The Middle East's most sophisticated military was humiliated by a decidedly low-tech assault, in which terrorists used tunnels, paragliders and bulldozers to breach the border in force.

Israel also suffered from a second fallacy: the conviction that our enemy thinks like we do.

"Mirror-imaging" plagues all countries, indeed all humans: We find it hard to imagine that someone else's definition of rationality may be different from our own. The Israeli version of this error centered on the idea that Hamas had become too hooked on the economic benefits of relative quiet in its relations with Israel—that it was too focused on securing leadership of the Palestinian movement by improving the lot of the people under its control—to risk everything in a major escalation.

That calculation of costs and benefits might have appealed to a democratic movement, or to an organization that was mostly interested in governing. But Hamas, alas, proved to be the same organization as ever. It has a penchant for the nastiest forms of brutality. It has a deep-seated hatred for, and a self-declared desire to eradicate, Israel. And it was willing to pursue that agenda at an appalling cost in Israeli and Palestinian lives.

A third myth has afflicted the U.S. more than Israel: the myth that lasting peace is possible with the current rulers of Iran. The U.S. has been searching for decades, without success, for Iranian moderates with whom to seek reconciliation. President Joe Biden settled for the more limited objective of de-escalation: Iranian restraint in the region and managing its nuclear program, in exchange for American restraint in applying or enforcing economic sanctions.

But Iran—which has armed, funded and assisted Hamas for years—apparently wasn't interested in de-escalation. A regime that was founded in anti-Americanism and anti-Zionism, and that seeks to make the Middle East its privileged domain, was mainly interested in empowering the actors that help it batter its foes. And if Iran directly sanctioned this attack, it presumably did so to disrupt another aspect of U.S. strategy—the effort to broker normalization between Israel and Saudi Arabia and thereby strengthen the anti-Tehran coalition.

The U.S. has long dreamed of a more reasonable Iran because it is eager to downsize American investment in a region that has consumed so much of it. A final myth recent events expose, however, is the notion that Washington can depart the Middle East without leaving strategic chaos in its wake.

For a decade, the U.S. has been trying to refocus on other priorities. Consecutive U.S. defense strategies have made clear that the Pentagon wants to take resources out of the region. But with depressing regularity, both Democratic and Republican administrations have been compelled to surge military forces back in, to deal with violent crises—the ISIS onslaught in Iraq and Syria, heightened tensions in the Persian Gulf, and now the risk that Tehran or its proxies might expand or escalate the current crisis.

The Middle East, unfortunately, can't police or stabilize itself. The U.S. still has important interests there, such as suppression of terrorist groups and the smooth flow of global energy supplies. If anything, the region is becoming more crucial as a locus of competition between America and its major rivals. Pulling back, then, tends to result in eruptions that compel reengagement, in worse straits than before.

America can have retrenchment from the Middle East, or it can have a tolerable situation there—but it can't have both. The sooner America and Israel learn these and other lessons of this crisis, the better positioned they will be for the difficult times ahead.

NMPASI's CAP: Empowering disabilities for NDEAM

By TIAVA TO'OMATA
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Tiava To'omata is a projects specialist at the Northern Marianas Protection & Advocacy Systems, Inc.

The Northern Marianas Protection & Advocacy Systems, Inc. is the state-designated protection and advocacy system whose mission is to protect the civil, legal, and human rights of individuals with disabilities in the CNMI. At NMPASI, there is a program called the Client Assistance Program that plays a pivotal role in empowering individuals with disabilities to overcome employment challenges. As we celebrate National Disability Employment Awareness Month, CAP's impact on fostering inclusion and raising awareness cannot be overstated.

The Client Assistance Program is dedicated to advocating for the rights of people with disabilities, providing guidance on complex legal matters, accommodation issues, and discrimination in regard to receiving rehabilitation services. One essential aspect of CAP's role is to act as a bridge between individuals with disabilities and the CNMI Office of Vocational Rehabilitation. In this capacity, CAP ensures that OVR is fulfilling its mission and obligations effectively for our shared client(s). This is not a critique of OVR but rather a testament to the importance of accountability and due process in service delivery.

For consumers and clients, as well as initial applicants of OVR, CAP serves as a resource for further clarification and guidance. It enables clients to file grievances, should the need arise, and seeks resolutions that are fair and just. Additionally, if an applicant has been denied OVR services, they may seek assistance with NMPASI through the CAP to ensure that the closure or denial is justified. It's important to emphasize that these measures are not intended as criticism but as mechanisms to ensure that the services provided by OVR align with the best interests of individuals with disabilities.

Clients who may not agree with OVR's decisions or are unsatisfied with OVR services can find a supportive partner through CAP. CAP's role in these instances is to mediate and advocate, aiming for outcomes that are both favorable to the clients and compliant with applicable laws and regulations. The goal is to enhance the quality and effectiveness of services without diminishing the commendable efforts of OVR.

The relationship between NMPASI's Client Assistance Program and the CNMI Office of Vocational Rehabilitation is a powerful force in breaking down barriers, fostering inclusion, and promoting equality in the workforce. As we celebrate NDEAM, this relationship serves as a testament to the shared commitment of both organizations to create a future where everyone can contribute their unique talents and skills to the workforce. It embodies the true spirit of NDEAM, reminding us that together, we can build a more inclusive and equitable world for individuals with disabilities while recognizing the importance of checks and balances in the service delivery process.

For more information on the Client Assistance Program, you may contact NMPASI via telephone at (670) 235-7273/74, online at www.nmpasi.org, or visit us at our new office located on the fifth floor of the Marianas Business Plaza, Room 505.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Bamboozling the people island-style

Too many of our leaders have continued to fail miserably and bamboozled the people by not putting forth a legitimate effort to find new money for the CNMI. I was asked on the Marianas Agupa Show if I were to advise the governor/government on what to do about our economy and my answer was "find new money." In the past our leaders didn't have to work at finding investors, but times and the situation have changed and, instead of doing the work to find new investors, our leaders seem to be lost about what to do. Unfortunately, they have gone down the same old path of raising taxes and fees when they should have been looking for new money and new tourists to replace the Chinese on Day 1.

Instead of finding a way to get our hemp industry the start that I insisted the Senate leave in the bill which became law, they are busy trying to find ways of putting the burden of new money for the government on the people by raising taxes, when people are at their very ends trying to make ends meet! We can't bear the weight of increased taxes, especially with inflation from the COVID-19 stimulus and when the expectation for this new group of leaders was to find new money and new tourists for the CNMI.

Heck, we still haven't done anything to even try and promote our cannabis industry. The Casino Commission hasn't even tried to establish a definitive outcome about the $77 million owed by IPI and yet everyone else, including the Casino Commission and the government are in line for their money, which tells me the people are being bamboozled by the Casino Commission and our leaders, as the governor and Legislature are silent about helping people!

To make it worse, the Legislature has now raised the taxes on betel nut. There is also a bill to raise taxes on soda and other commodities, just to raise money for the government. Raising the cost of living does not help people and is killing the livelihood of many, especially the poor. It seems that nothing is safe from the politicians. Heck, the Senate president, who is doing a decent job, has bamboozled the NMDs as she was complaining about her bill being trashed to give the NMDs the interest money from MPLT but now that she is the president, you hear nothing about the NMD's money. If they are financing the government with these ridiculous taxes that are running up the cost of living on everything, then I think we elected the wrong people again. The governor shouldn't sign any more bills that raise taxes and tell the Legislature to do the work to help him find new money and new investors for the CNMI.

I thank the governor for finally doing some work to get our Mariana Resort leased again, but when it comes to finding new tourists, there hasn't been a single legitimate effort to bring back the Japanese tourists—just nominal lobbying efforts with the tour agents in Japan when the CNMI needs the full support of the Japanese government to turn things around with the Japanese.

The CNMI literally slapped the Japanese in the face with our commitment to China, which is why they left and I even told our leaders that the Japanese would leave and it's obvious they didn't listen.

The pathetic part is we still have people talking about bringing back the Chinese. That is in direct conflict with our genuine need for the Japanese to return. The Chinese government has even said they won't send their people to the CNMI to gamble, so it's really a no-brainer, which is why everyone should follow the governor's lead on pivoting away from China and start working to create new tourist markets.

We have too many leaders and people who can't understand the need to change our appeal as a tourist destination. I keep saying our World War II tourism appeal is over and we need to change to become an international family destination but they don't know how to do it and won't let me help and/or show them how.

Ambrose M. Bennett
Kagman III, Saipan

Sonneta for the Israel/Hamas War

LITERARY NOOK

By JOEY CONNOLLY
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Joey aka Pepe Batbon Connolly is a retired educator who taught in the CNMI, NOLA, and LVNV. He is a sonnet practitioner who enjoys stargazing.

» Sonnets using a classical music sonata form

Exposition=MC 2. Micro Macro Creation Crisis commentary

"Here you will read theory of universal creation/and death of children in the desert/life in creation and tragic devastation/On my mind billions of years/our universe in the making/while in the Gaza Strip fears/a million children in fear are quaking/The universe continues inflation at the speed of light/while children face death as human shields /in the terrorists' fight/in Israel and Hamas tragic plight.

This is Yin Yang poetry of universal proportions/and children's horrific death

from war's evil distortions/Our universe continues to 'evolve'/ while in Gaza a million children's young lives 'devolve'."

The Gaza Strip, about the size of the city of Philadelphia, has around 2.1 million people. Over half the population is under 18 years of age. There are over 300 miles of tunnels dug beneath hospitals, schools, and apartment buildings. Many tunnels are booby trapped. The Yin Yang symbol represents opposites within one circle: night and day, hot and cold, male and female, negative and positive. expansion and contraction. Each side contrasts and complements the other.

Sturm und drang *is German for confusion, or storm and stress.*

Development: A Symbiotic Singularity Synopsis

It began in great solitude and silence
A moment of light , an invisible spark
An explosion of unbelievable violence
A universe not yet a universe—darkness
Light. Primordial photons soon coalesce
Atoms grow, nucleus, proton and neutron.
Growth in numbers cosmologists guess
Inflation theory seems to think on and on
Billions of galaxies form light years apart
Chaos theory? Did laws of physics plan it?
Many different sizes and types of stars start
Many moons form around billions of planets
Einstein's theory frames modern inquiry
String particles tie it to Quantum Theory

Guileless in Gaza

We have not very long to live—I think
Death not far away for millions of children
Loving living little ones are lost today
The fabric of our souls is soon worn away
Incomprehensible violence is now seen
Massacres murders decapitation of infants
We tried couldn't reach you or loved ones
We cried out loud sobbing and screaming
Hearts broken sad songs and words spoken
Your lives on fire flaming before our eyes
We have not very long to live—I think
Before bombs fall and drones discover us
We need electric power and water to drink
We have not very long to live—I think.

Recapitulation: Yin Yang Sturm und Drang

On the Gaza Strip the number of deaths mount
Women and children used as human shields
Everyday there grows a higher death count
Inside buildings then up to heaven's fields
Told to head southward with no way out
No water no electricity no food no doubt
Rockets overhead, in tunnels underground
Innocent citizens tremble at the sound
Over a music festival a horrible pall
Tanks line up on the northern border
Thousands of troops await the next order
Deaths of countless innocents hang over all
Total number of hostages is still unknown
Death totals on both sides have grown.

Coda, from Pablo Neruda's The Creation
"… in the great solitude a howl began,
something rolled crying, the shadows
half-opened, rising alone as if the planets
sobbed and then the echoes rolled, tumbling
and tumbling until what was born was silent".

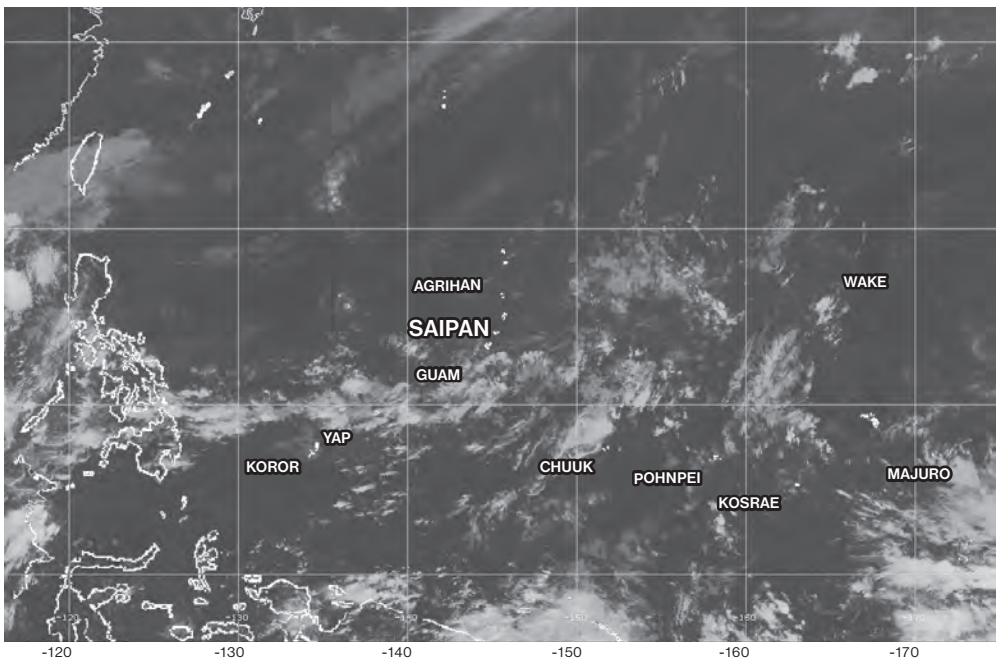
" My soul is distressed/My mind is at war."
—Bob Dylan, now in his 80s, still performing.

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Partly sunny with isolated showers. Southeast winds 10 to 15 mph.	Partly sunny with a 20 percent chance of showers. Southeast winds 10 to 15 mph.	Mostly cloudy with a 30 percent chance of showers and a slight chance of thunderstorms.	Mostly cloudy with a 30 percent chance of showers and a slight chance of thunderstorms.	Partly cloudy with a 20 percent chance of showers.
86 / 79°	88 / 79°	87° / 78°	87° / 78°	88° / 78°

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 8:54 AM, MONDAY, OCTOBER 16, 2023

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Doppler radar and satellite imagery shows mostly sunny skies with a few pin prick showers in western Guam waters. Altimetry shows 8 to 12 feet to the west and 6 to 10 on the east. Ipan buoy shows 2 to 3 feet, while Tanapag shows 9 to 11 feet.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: https://www.weather.gov/gum/

MICRONESIA		▲ ▼ °F
Guam and Rota	Partly Cloudy	85° / 78°
Palau	Partly Cloudy	86° / 78°
Yap	Thunderstorm	87° / 80°
Chuuk	Thunderstorm	86° / 80°
Pohnpei	Partly Cloudy	86° / 76°
Kosrae	Partly Cloudy	86° / 76°
Majuro	Thunderstorm	86° / 81°

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:08 AM	5:55 PM
Wednesday	6:09 AM	5:55 PM
Thursday	6:09 AM	5:54 PM
Friday	6:09 AM	5:54 PM
Saturday	6:09 AM	5:53 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	8:00 AM	7:35 PM	-
Wednesday	8:56 AM	8:22 PM	-
Thursday	9:55 AM	9:16 PM	-
Friday	10:55 AM	10:14 PM	-
Saturday	11:55 AM	11:16 PM	-

AROUND THE GLOBE		▲ ▼ °F
Auckland	Windy	64° / 54°
Beijing	Mostly Sunny	70° / 48°
Hong Kong	Sunny	86° / 75°
Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	86° / 76°
London	Showers	57° / 50°
Los Angeles	Sunny	79° / 60°
Manila	Showers	90° / 79°
Melbourne	Showers	57° / 48°
Miami	Thunderstorm	84° / 79°
New York	Partly Cloudy	61° / 46°
Osaka	Rain	73° / 63°
Paris	Partly Cloudy	63° / 54°
Busan	Rain	70° / 61°
Rome	Showers	75° / 61°
Salem	Mostly Cloudy	70° / 54°
San Francisco	Mostly Sunny	64° / 51°
Seoul	Partly Cloudy	72° / 48°
Tokyo	Rain	72° / 64°
Washington, DC	Sunny	64° / 43°

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY		FEET
2:55 AM	Low Tide	-0.05
9:31 AM	High Tide	1.78
3:11 PM	Low Tide	0.98
8:22 PM	High Tide	1.77

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF OCTOBER 8, 2023

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA117	9:50AM	10:30AM	Daily

SAIPAN- NARITA (NRT)

UA824	7:25AM	9:55AM	1, 3, 5

GUAM-MANILA (MNL)

PR 111	5:55AM	7:55AM	Daily
UA193	6:55PM	10:55PM	2, 5 via Palau
UA183	7:20PM	9:10PM	Daily

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

OZ626/703	4:20AM	10:35PM	1, 4, 5, 7
7C3403/2305	4:45AM	10:20PM	Daily
UA117/183	9:50AM	9:10PM	Daily via Guam
UA117/193	9:50AM	10:55PM	2, 5 via Guam, Palau

SAIPAN-INCHEON (ICN)

TW308	3:15AM	7:00AM	Daily
OZ626	4:20AM	7:55AM	1, 4, 5, 7
7C3403	4:45AM	8:35AM	Daily
7C3405	4:10PM	7:45PM	Daily

SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)

7C3451	3:20AM	6:30AM	1, 4, 5, 7

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA174	8:00AM	8:50AM	Daily

NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN

UA825	9:25PM	1:50AM+1	2, 4, 7

MANILA (MNL)-GUAM

UA184	10:25PM	4:25AM+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7
UA192	10:25PM	6:10AM+1	2, 5 via Palau
PR110	10:30PM	4:25AM+1	Daily
UA184	11:50PM	5:50AM+1	2, 5

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

OZ702/625	12:05PM	2:55AM+1	3, 4, 6, 7
UA184/174	10:25PM	8:50AM+1	1, 3, 4, 6,7 via Guam
UA192/174	10:25PM	8:50AM+1	2, 5 via Palau, Guam
7C2306/3406	11:10PM	3:10PM+1	Daily
UA184/174	11:50PM	8:50AM+1	2, 5 via Guam

INCHEON (ICN)-SAIPAN

7C3406	9:30AM	3:10PM	Daily
TW307	8:30PM	2:15AM+1	Daily
OZ625	9:25PM	2:55AM+1	3, 4, 6, 7
7C3404	10:10PM	3:40AM+1	Daily

BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN

7C3452	9:35PM	2:20AM+1	3, 4, 6, 7

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines; PR, Philippine Airlines; TW, T'Way Air; OZ, Asiana Airlines; 7C, Jeju Air; BX, Air Busan • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JUNE 1, 2022

SAIPAN TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1301	8:30	9:00	Daily
1302	11:00	11:30	Mon/Wed/Fri
1302	12:00	12:30	Tues/Thurs/Sat/Sun
1303	15:30	16:00	Daily

ROTA TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
3101	9:30	10:00	Daily
3102	13:00	13:30	Tues/Thurs/Sat/Sun
3102	14:00	14:30	Mon/Wed/Fri
3103	16:30	17:00	Daily

ROTA TO GUAM

LIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
3401	12:00	12:30	Mon/Wed/Fri

GUAM TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
4301	13:00	13:30	Mon/Wed/Fri

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1202	8:00	8:15	Daily
1203	9:00	9:15	Daily
1204	10:00	10:15	Daily
1208	14:00	14:15	Daily
1209	15:00	15:15	Daily
1210	16:00	16:15	Daily
1211	17:00	17:15	Daily

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
2102	8:30	8:45	Daily
2103	9:30	9:45	Daily
2104	10:30	10:45	Daily
2108	14:30	14:45	Daily
2109	15:30	15:45	Daily
2110	16:30	16:45	Daily
2111	17:30	17:45	Daily

Business

Shoes Outlet fills void by opening in Garapan

By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
EDITOR

Local sneakerheads and those who just want decent shoes for everyday wear don't necessarily have to buy online anymore.

This, after Shoes Outlet opened last month along Beach Road in Garapan.

Owner Henry Liang said he opened Shoes Outlet after seeing first-hand how the island community struggled to find affordable and good quality footwear when Payless ShoeSource closed in 2018.

"Ever since five years ago when Payless ShoeSource closed we lost a good place to buy shoes. Last year, I went to Guam and Los Angeles many times and every time I bought many brand-name shoes from Ross [Dress For Less] and other shoes stores at very reasonable prices."

That's when suddenly a light bulb turned on in Liang's head and the genesis of Shoes Outlet began.

"I started to think why not open a new shoe store with the same price point as Payless? So, Saipan people can shop many kinds of name-brand shoes and good quality shoes at reasonable, affordable price same like Ross. So, I started to prepare," he said.

Liang's dream of opening a new shoe store finally came into fruition last Sept. 28 when he unveiled Shoes Outlet.

"That's when I opened this new business for the public to provide the people of Saipan another option to shop, better quality, and better price!"

MARK RABAGO

Shoes Outlet is located in the same building where Gree Air Conditioning and Artman Corp. is along Beach Road in Garapan.

MARK RABAGO

Shoes Outlet carries various types of shoes for men, women, and children ranging from working shoes, safety shoes, sports shoes, dress shoes, boots, etc.

Currently, Shoes Outlet carries various types of shoes for men, women, and children ranging from working shoes, safety shoes, sports shoes, dress shoes, boots, etc.

As for brands, Liang said Shoes Outlet has Caterpillar, Wolverine, Coleman, Lugz, Safetoe, INC International Concepts, Karen Scott, Fila, New Balance, Adidas, among others.

Asked what makes his new shoes store different from others on Saipan, Liang said, "we try to provide people various shoes for people's needs with better quality and better price!"

MARK RABAGO

Shoes Outlet currently has a Halloween sale where original boots from Mercy and other superstores in Los Angeles that originally cost $60-$100 will only retail for $29 or two for just $49.

As for promotions, Shoes Outlet currently has a Halloween sale where original boots from Mercy and other superstores in Los Angeles that originally cost $60-$100 will only retail for $29 or two for just $49. Additionally, Liang will be giving away free socks for every purchase of $30 or more.

Shoes Outlet, located in the same building where Gree Air Conditioning and Artman Corp. is along Beach Road in Garapan, is open from 10:30am to 8pm, Monday-Sunday.

For more information, call or WhatsApp (670) 287-2199 or email liangqihao88@gmail.com.

Drug used in diabetes treatment Mounjaro helped dieters shed 60 pounds, study finds

By JONEL ALECCIA
AP HEALTH WRITER

The medicine in the diabetes drug Mounjaro helped people with obesity or who are overweight lose at least a quarter of their body weight, or about 60 pounds on average, when combined with intensive diet and exercise, a new study shows.

By comparison, a group of people who also dieted and exercised, but then received dummy shots, lost weight initially but then regained some, researchers reported Sunday in the journal Nature Medicine.

"This study says that if you lose weight before you start the drug, you can then add a lot more weight loss after," said Dr. Thomas Wadden, a University of Pennsylvania obesity researcher and psychology professor who led the study.

The results, which were also presented Sunday at a medical conference, confirm that the drug made by Eli Lilly & Co. has the potential to be one of the most powerful medical treatments for obesity to date, outside experts said.

"Any way you slice it, it's a quarter of your total body weight," said Dr. Caroline Apovian, who treats obesity at Brigham and Women's Hospital and wasn't involved in the study.

The injected drug, tirzepatide, was approved in the U.S. in May 2022 to treat diabetes. Sold as Mounjaro, it has been used "off-label" to treat obesity, joining a frenzy of demand for diabetes and weight-loss medications including Ozempic and Wegovy, made by Novo Nordisk.

All the drugs, which carry retail price tags of $900 a month or more, have been in shortage for months.

Tirzepatide targets two hormones that kick in after people eat to regulate appetite and the feeling of fullness communicated between the gut and the brain. Semaglutide, the drug used in Ozempic and Wegovy, targets one of those hormones.

The new study, which was funded by Eli Lilly, enrolled about 800 people who had obesity or were overweight with a weight-related health complication—but not diabetes. On average, study participants weighed about 241 pounds (109.5 kilograms) to start and had a body-mass index—a common measure of obesity—of about 38.

After three months of intensive diet and exercise, more than 200 participants left the trial, either because they failed to lose enough weight or for other reasons. The remaining nearly 600 people were randomized to receive tirzepatide or a placebo via weekly injections for about 16 months. Nearly 500 people completed the study.

Participants in both groups lost about 7% of their body weight, or almost 17 pounds (8 kilograms), during the diet-and-exercise phase. Those who received the drug went on to lose an additional 18.4% of initial body weight, or about 44 pounds (20 kilograms) more, on average. Those who received the dummy shots regained about 2.5% of their initial weight, or 6 pounds (2.7 kilograms).

Overall, about 88% of those taking tirzepatide lost 5% or more of their body weight during the trial, compared with almost 17% of those taking placebo. Nearly 29% of those taking the drug lost at least a quarter of their body weight, compared with just over 1% of those taking placebo.

What Google's antitrust trial means for your search habits

By MICHAEL LIEDTKE
AP TECHNOLOGY WRITER

If government regulators prevail against Google in the biggest U.S. antitrust trial in a quarter century, it's likely to unleash drastic changes that will undermine the dominance of a search engine that defines the internet for billions of people.

As the 10-week trial probing Google's business practices nears its midway point, it's still too early to tell if U.S. District Judge Amit Mehta will side with the Justice Department and try to handcuff one of the world's most dominant tech companies.

If Mehta rules that Google has been running an illegal monopoly in search, the punishment could open up new online avenues for consumers and businesses to explore in pursuit of information, entertainment and commerce.

"The judge can compel Google to open the floodgates so more startups and third-party competitors can put greater competitive pressure on Google, which will create higher quality online services," said Luther Lowe, senior vice president of public policy at Yelp. The online business review site has been one of Google's harshest critics while spending more than a decade railing against a strategy that favors its own services in search results.

Google's search engine earned its huge market share by almost instantaneously presenting people with helpful information culled from the billions of websites that have been indexed since former Stanford University graduate students Larry Page and Sergey Brin developed the technology during the late 1990s.

In addition to its technological wizardry, Google also pays billions of dollars each year to ensure its search engine is the default choice for answering queries entered in the world's most popular smartphones and web browsers.

These agreements don't preclude users from switching to a different search engine in their settings, but it's a tedious process that few people bother to navigate. This reality is why Google is willing to pay so much for the privileged position, according to the Justice Department.

Google's payments for preeminent search placement—including an estimated $15 billion to $20 billion per year to Apple alone—are at the head of the Justice Department's case, making it probable the judge would prohibit them if he rules against Google.

Should that happen, experts believe the most likely remedy in the U.S. would be a requirement for smartphones and web browsers to display a palette of different search engines during the set-up process. That's something already being done in Europe, where all indications, so far, are that most people are still opting for Google.

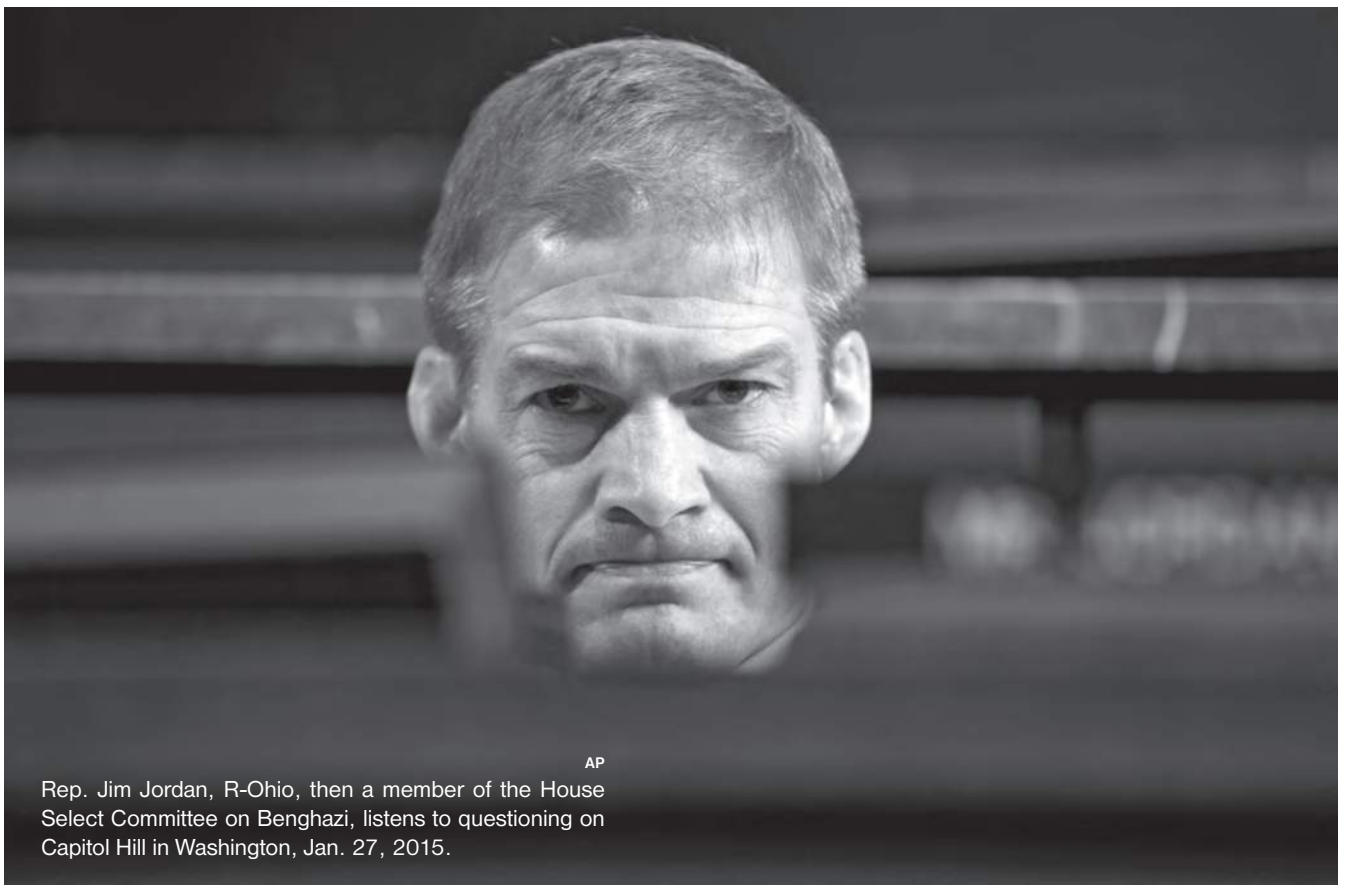
Nation

Jordan's rapid rise cheered by Trump and far right

WASHINGTON (AP)—Rep. Jim Jordan has such a reputation as a political brawler that former House Speaker John Boehner once said he'd never met someone "who spent more time tearing things apart."

Now, nearly a decade after Boehner stepped down in the face of a conservative revolt, it is Jordan who is trying to bring the Republican Party together to win the speaker's gavel.

A favorite of former President Donald Trump and darling of the party's rabble-rousing base, Jordan's path to the U.S. government's third-highest office is by no means certain in a House Republican conference riven by conflict following the ouster two weeks ago of former Speaker Kevin McCarthy. To win, he'll need support from nearly every House Republicans, having few votes to spare in a chamber they only narrowly control.



AP

Rep. Jim Jordan, R-Ohio, then a member of the House Select Committee on Benghazi, listens to questioning on Capitol Hill in Washington, Jan. 27, 2015.

Should Jordan succeed, it would help cement the far right's takeover of the Republican Party and trigger fresh conflict with Democrats over the size and scope of government. But a Jordan speakership would also come with baggage that could present a challenge to Republicans as they labor to hold their House majority in next year's election, an effort that will likely hinge on drawing support from moderate voters in swing districts.

Some members of Congress—including some in his own party—label Jordan an extremist unworthy of the speakership, pointing to his active role in Trump's bid to stop the certification of the 2020 presidential election, as well as his refusal to honor a congressional subpoena about the Jan. 6 attack at the Capitol. Further in his past, Jordan continues to be questioned over his alleged knowledge of sexual abuse in the wrestling program at Ohio State University—accusations he adamantly denies.

Former Rep. Liz Cheney, who helped lead the Jan. 6 investigation and was ousted from GOP leadership by conservatives, has warned that giving Jordan the gavel could even pose a threat to democracy itself.

"If the Republicans decide that Jim Jordan should be the speaker of the House," Cheney said during a recent speech, "there would no longer be any possible way to argue that a group of elected Republicans could be counted on to defend the Constitution."

Jordan has defended his bare-knuckled approach as rooted in principle, a message that resonates with conservatives who have long accused GOP leaders of capitulation.

"One person says disruption," Jordan told The Associated Press in 2017. "We like to say we're doing what we told the voters we were going to do."

Jordan, a 59-year-old father of four, was born near Dayton in western Ohio. He was a four-time state wrestling champion in high school and a two-time NCAA champion at the University of Wisconsin in the 1980s. That helped him land a coaching job at Ohio State University before his election to the Ohio legislature in the mid 1990s.

His conservatism and zeal for a political fight were evident in early clashes with GOP legislative leaders, as well as with Republican Gov. Bob Taft.

When he decided to pursue a state Senate seat in 1999, he faced opposition from the GOP establishment and from Boehner, then a four-term congressman, who supported a rival. Jordan easily won, ousting a veteran state representative with nearly 60% of the vote. Jordan was elected to Congress several years later, in 2006.

After the tea party wave swept Republicans to power in 2011, the roles reversed, and Jordan was among the conservatives who were frequently Boehner's tormentors.

DeSantis claims the US shouldn't take in Palestinian refugees from Gaza because they're 'all antisemitic'

WASHINGTON (AP)—Republican presidential candidate Ron DeSantis said the United States should not take in any Palestinian refugees if they flee the Gaza Strip because they "are all antisemitic" and he dismissed international entreaties for Israel to provide clean running water and utilities to the 2.3 million civilians in the territory.

DeSantis' comments were a striking departure from the public stand taken by U.S. officials, including some of his fellow Republicans, who draw distinctions between the aims of the Palestinian people and those of Hamas. The militant group has ruled has Gaza since 2007 and launched an attack against Israel last weekend.

DeSantis' endorsement of such tactics comes as he has advocated hard-line policies as a White House candidate. He suggested that not providing water or other services would persuade Hamas to release the hostages it has taken during its incursion.

"You have Israelis being held hostage, as well as Americans being held hostage, but I don't think they are under an obligation to be providing water and these utilities while those hostages are being held. Hamas should return those hostages before any discussions are had," DeSantis told CBS's "Face The Nation."

The United Nations, aid groups and Israeli human rights groups have beseeched Israel to allow water and emergency deliveries of fuel to flow into the Gaza Strip. Medics in the region are warning that thousands could die as hospitals run low on fuel and other basic supplies, and desperate Palestinians are trying to escape northern Gaza before a potentisal Israeli ground campaign.

The latest Israel-Hamas war has already claimed more than 3,600 lives.

DeSantis' comments underscored how the Florida governor is embracing hard-right rhetoric as he tries to gain ground on former President Donald Trump, the GOP front-runner for the 2024 presidential nomination.

DeSantis first suggested the U.S. should not accept refugees from Gaza while speaking at a campaign event in Iowa on Saturday and argued that they "are all antisemitic."

Former U.N. Ambassador Nikki Haley, a GOP candidate, said on CNN's "State of the Union" that "there are so many of these people who want to be free from this terrorist rule. They want to be free from all of that. And America's always been sympathetic to the fact that you can separate civilians from terrorists. And that's what we have to do."

Few Republicans have confidence in elections

SUAMICO, Wis. (AP)—Kim Pytleski could barely sleep the night before. She replayed the PowerPoint slides in her head, packed her notebook and took a deep breath.

The clerk from a rural Wisconsin county north of Green Bay was preparing for a public meeting to explain the election process to residents. She didn't know who she would encounter. Would some in the audience deny the results of the last presidential election? Would the conversation get combative? Most importantly, would she get through to anyone?

They were questions Pytleski never expected to ask herself when she started the job in Oconto County more than 14 years ago. But since then, election conspiracy theories have taken root in the rural, heavily Republican county in northeastern Wisconsin. It's among large swaths of the country where distrust of voting and ballot-counting, fanned by former President Donald Trump's false claims of a stolen election, maintains a stubborn grasp.

Pytleski, who was born and raised in the county, hears conspiracy theories nearly everywhere she goes: Democrats are paying people to stuff ballot boxes with illegal votes, absentee voting allows rampant fraud, voting machines are hacked by foreign powers such as Russia or China. She receives skeptical letters and emails.

Election denialism, she said, "has gotten its hold on it."

For elections officials and grassroots democracy groups in the presidential swing state, it has been an uphill fight to combat the doubts and the people who continue to spread them. They describe grappling with an almost faith-like pull of conspiracy theories perpetuated by online misinformation and far-right figures.

Still, they press on, taking on the issue one community event and one conversation at a time, hoping for a half-step forward.

"This state is vital, and it's ground zero in this fight to save our republic," said Reid Ribble, a Republican who represented the area in Congress until 2017 and is an adviser to the nonprofit Keep Our Republic. The group is holding town hall-style forums throughout Wisconsin hoping to restore faith in elections and has plans to do the same in two other states that will be pivotal to next year's presidential race, Michigan and Pennsylvania.

The group's efforts come as paranoia around elections has gained a persistent foothold across the country, especially in rural areas. That's led to attempts to ditch voting machines in favor of less accurate and efficient hand counts, threats of violence against election workers and the violent Jan. 6, 2021, attack on the U.S. Capitol.

Polling from last summer by The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research found that only 22% of Republicans have high confidence that votes in the 2024 presidential election will be counted accurately, compared to 71% of Democrats, while a solid majority of Republicans continue to believe President Joe Biden's election win was illegitimate.

The deep partisan divide comes amid a relentless campaign of lies from Trump that the 2020 election was stolen as he seeks a second term in the White House.

Wisconsin has been an epicenter of the efforts to undermine faith in elections. The state supreme court, then with a conservative majority, came within one vote in 2020 of overturning the presidential results, and Republicans in the Legislature later launched a partisan investigation seeking evidence of widespread fraud. That probe that eventually landed before a judge who declared that it had uncovered "absolutely no evidence of election fraud."

Instead, multiple audits and recounts have affirmed Biden's 21,000-vote win in the state. Yet the doubt remains.

Asia

Israel war upends China's ambitions in Middle East

» But may serve Beijing in the end

WASHINGTON (AP)—In June, Chinese President Xi Jinping hosted the Palestinian president in Beijing and invited the Israeli prime minister for an official state visit. Benjamin Netanyahu accepted, and China was on track for a bigger role in the region.

Then came the Hamas attack against Israel, which has made Netanyahu's late October trip uncertain and put Beijing's Middle East approach to the test. China's stated neutrality on the war has upset Israel, but Beijing may gain in the long run by forging closer ties with Arab countries, experts said.

"For a while at least, Beijing's Middle East policy is paralyzed by the war," said Shi Yinhong, professor of international relations at Beijing-based Renmin University of China. "The U.S., which strongly supports Israel, is directly or indirectly involved. Who is there to listen to China?"

That hasn't stopped China from trying to be heard.

Its Middle East envoy, Zhai Jun, talked to Palestinian and Egyptian officials by phone this past week, calling for an immediate cease-fire and humanitarian support for the Palestinian people.

Zhai also called Israeli officials to say China "has no selfish interests on the Palestinian issue but has always stood on the side of peace, on the side of fairness and justice." He said that "China is willing to work with the international community to promote peace and encourage talks."

Wang Yi, the Chinese foreign minister, came out more strongly for the Palestinians, saying "the crux of the matter is that justice has not been done to the Palestinian people."

"This conflict once again proved in an extremely tragic manner that the way to solve the Palestinian issue lies in resuming genuine peace talks as soon as possible and realizing the legitimate rights of the Palestinian nation," Wang said during a call with an adviser to the Brazilian president.

China has long advocated for a two-state solution that allows for an independent Palestinian state.

Secretary of State Antony Blinken, while traveling in the Mideast over the weekend, called Wang to ask China to use whatever influence it has in the region to keep other countries and groups from entering the conflict and broadening it, according to the State Department, which declined to characterize Wang's response. China is known to have close trade and political ties with Iran, which in turn supports Hamas and Lebanon's Hezbollah.

The conversation was the first high-level U.S. contact with China over the Mideast situation since the Hamas attack.

Beijing, by trying to maintain a delicate balance, wants to position itself as a mediator and exert its influence in the region, said Maria Papageorgiou, a lecturer in politics and international relations at University of Exeter, and Mohammad Eslami, a researcher at University Minho, in joint email.

The U.S. support for Israel will give China an opportunity to expand its arms sales to dissatisfied Arab countries, but China also wants to resolve the crisis to protect its economic interests in the region, they said.

"China's engagement in the Middle East is set to increase during this conflict. Beijing will play an enhanced role in efforts to end the war and secure its economic interests and wants to capitalize on the Arab states' frustration with U.S. to establish itself as a great power in the region," the researchers wrote.

Beijing's approach, though, risks alienating Israel.

Tuvia Gering, a researcher at the Israel-China Policy Center at the Institute for National Security Studies in Tel Aviv, described Beijing's position as "pro-Palestine neutrality," much like its position on Russia's invasion of Ukraine has signaled support for the Kremlin.

"You cannot be neutral in something like this. Silence is acquiescence," Gering said. "The problem, I think, the biggest one we have, is that China, instead of being the responsible major power that it claims to be, it is exploiting this conflict for geopolitical benefits."

ASIAN BRIEFS

Myanmar's military seeks to keep ethnic minority allies on its side with anniversary of ceasefire

BANGKOK (AP)—Myanmar's military government hosted representatives from ethnic rebel groups Sunday to mark the eighth anniversary of the signing of a multilateral cease-fire agreement. But the event was boycotted by three of the signatories that oppose the current army-installed regime. The event in the capital Naypyitaw was the first such formal gathering of the military government and ethnic minority leaders since the army seized power from Aung San Suu Kyi's elected government on Feb. 1, 2021. Maintaining a cease-fire with as many groups as possible is crucial for the military government, which for more than two years has been faced with nationwide armed resistance from opponents of its 2021 takeover. Those pro-democracy forces have crucial alliances with, or support from, several ethnic rebel groups. The military has launched offensives in the territory long under the control of the ethnic minority groups. In order to shake and divide the anti-military rule alliances, the military government has also conducted a series of in-person peace talks with the leaders of ethnic minorities since May last year, with little to show for its effort.

Another powerful earthquake shakes quake-devastated region in western Afghanistan

ISLAMABAD (AP)—Another 6.3 magnitude earthquake struck part of western Afghanistan on Sunday after thousands of people died and entire villages were flattened by devastating quakes a week earlier. The latest quake was centered about 30 kilometers (19 miles) outside the city of Herat, the capital of Herat province, and was 6 kilometers (4 miles) below the surface, the U.S. Geological Survey said. It's the fourth quake the USGS has measured at 6.3 magnitude in the same area in just over a week. Aid group Save the Children said four people have died and that Herat Regional Hospital has received 153 injured. Everything in the Baloch area of Rabat Sangi district has collapsed. Several villages have been destroyed, according to the aid group. Authorities have given lower casualty numbers.

World

AS ISRAELI GROUND INVASION LOOMS

Palestinians scramble to find food, safety, water

KHAN YOUNIS, Gaza Strip (AP)—More than a million people have fled their homes in the besieged Gaza Strip in the past week, ahead of expected Israel invasion that seeks to eliminate Hamas' leadership after its deadly attack. The enclave's food and water supplies are dwindling, and its hospitals are warning that they are on the verge of collapse.

Israeli forces, supported by a growing deployment of U.S. warships in the region and the call-up of some 360,000 reservists, positioned themselves along Gaza's border and drilled for what Israel said would be a broad campaign to dismantle the militant group. Israel said it has already struck dozens of military targets, including command centers and rocket launchers, and also killed Hamas commanders.

Israeli officials have given no timetable for a ground incursion that aid groups warn could hasten a humanitarian crisis in the coastal Gaza enclave.

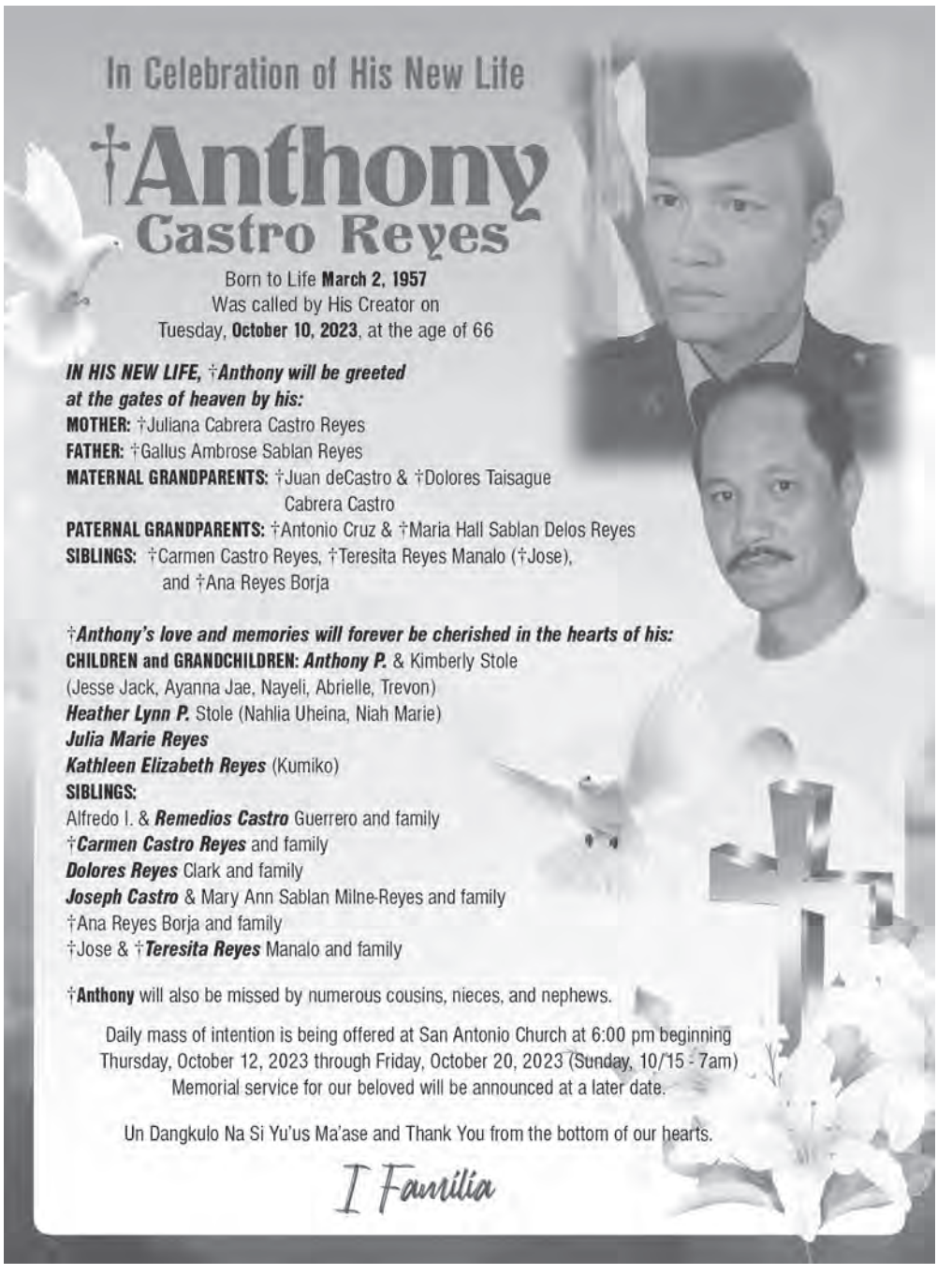
A week of blistering airstrikes have demolished entire neighborhoods but failed to stem militant rocket fire into Israel.

The Gaza Health Ministry said 2,670 Palestinians have been killed and 9,600 wounded since the fighting erupted, more than in the 2014 Gaza war, which lasted over six weeks. That makes this the deadliest of the five Gaza wars for both sides.

More than 1,400 Israelis have died, the vast majority civilians killed in Hamas' Oct. 7 assault. At least 155 others, including children, were captured by Hamas and taken into Gaza, according to Israel. It's also the deadliest war for Israel since the 1973 conflict with Egypt and Syria.

About 500,000 people, nearly one quarter of Gaza's population, were taking refuge in United Nations schools and other facilities across the territory, where water supplies were dwindling, said Juliette Touma, spokesperson for the U.N.'s Palestinian refugee agency. "Gaza is running dry," she said. The agency says an estimated 1 million people have been displaced in Gaza in a single week.

The U.S. State Department said Secretary of State Antony Blinken would return to Israel on Monday after completing a frantic six-country tour through Arab nations aimed at preventing the fighting from igniting a broader regional conflict. President Joe Biden is also considering a trip to Israel, though no plans have been finalized. In a television interview Sunday night, Biden, who has repeatedly proclaimed support for Israel, nonetheless said he thought it would be a "big mistake" for the country to reoccupy Gaza.


In Celebration of His New Life
†Anthony
Castro Reyes
Born to Life March 2, 1957
Was called by His Creator on
Tuesday, October 10, 2023, at the age of 66
IN HIS NEW LIFE, †Anthony will be greeted at the gates of heaven by his:
MOTHER: †Juliana Cabrera Castro Reyes
FATHER: †Gallus Ambrose Sablan Reyes
MATERNAL GRANDPARENTS: †Juan deCastro & †Dolores Taisague Cabrera Castro
PATERNAL GRANDPARENTS: †Antonio Cruz & †Maria Hall Sablan Delos Reyes
SIBLINGS: †Carmen Castro Reyes, †Teresita Reyes Manalo (†Jose), and †Ana Reyes Borja
†Anthony's love and memories will forever be cherished in the hearts of his:
CHILDREN and GRANDCHILDREN: Anthony P. & Kimberly Stole
(Jesse Jack, Ayanna Jae, Nayeli, Abrielle, Trevon)
Heather Lynn P. Stole (Nahlia Uheina, Niah Marie)
Julia Marie Reyes
Kathleen Elizabeth Reyes (Kumiko)
SIBLINGS:
Alfredo I. & Remedios Castro Guerrero and family
†Carmen Castro Reyes and family
Dolores Reyes Clark and family
Joseph Castro & Mary Ann Sablan Milne-Reyes and family
†Ana Reyes Borja and family
†Jose & †Teresita Reyes Manalo and family
†Anthony will also be missed by numerous cousins, nieces, and nephews.
Daily mass of intention is being offered at San Antonio Church at 6:00 pm beginning Thursday, October 12, 2023 through Friday, October 20, 2023 (Sunday, 10/15 - 7am)
Memorial service for our beloved will be announced at a later date.
Un Dangkulo Na Si Yu'us Ma'ase and Thank You from the bottom of our hearts.
I Familia

Overdrive

2023 Ram 2500 Heavy Duty Rebel is a beauty—and a beast

By HENRY PAYNE
The Detroit News

HOLLY OAKS, Michigan—Dude, light-duty off-road trucks are soooo 15 minutes ago.

On a sodden Saturday at Holly Oaks ORV Park, I could barely stand along Ridgeline Trail on the park's west side. At 6-feet-7-inches tall, my 2023 Ram 2500 Heavy Duty Rebel loomed beside me like the War Rig from "Mad Max: Fury Road."

Thirty-three-inch Goodyear Wrangler all-terrain tires. Power dome hood. Skid plates. Red war paint. A beast.

And a beauty. As I swung my mud-caked boots into the cab, I entered an interior straight out of a South Beach condo. Leather stitched dash, leather thrones, 12.3-inch digital instrument display, 12-inch vertical infotainment screen. What, no sauna?

Bigger is better and my fearsome 2500 Rebel has it all. Heavy Dutys designed for hauling yachts now have yacht-like interiors plus the off-road armor once reserved for Jeeps. Ram follows Ford's Tremor in bringing its Rebel off-road model to the HD segment—and Chevy isn't far behind with its first heavy-duty ZR2 trim for the 2024 model year. My friend Scott, a loyal Ford owner, covets the Tremor but was wowed by the Ram's interior. High praise.

The Rebel badge debuted on the Ram 1500 in 2015, but that truck can't fit in my garage either. So why not supersize to a 2500 and its monster, 17,000-pound towing numbers. Heck, this thing can tow a garage.

The license plate should be issued by the state of Brobdingnag.

The Rebel HD is massive. Gargantuan. Mega. In addition to the aforementioned highlights, my HD Rebel Crew Cab has a 410-horse V-8 (a 6.7-liter diesel inline-6 is a $9,595 option), 6-feet-4-inch bed, and 13-inch lift . I'm 6-feet-5-inches and had to haul myself into the seat by the steering wheel. Mrs. Payne needed a ladder.

With great size comes great responsibility.

After a night of heavy rain, I drove the HD Rebel to Holly Oaks for some playtime. At nearly four tons, 79 inches wide, and 19½ feet long, the War Rig needs room and I drove it on adaptive cruise control up Telegraph Road so radar would aid my eyeballs in detecting any sudden slowdowns up ahead. War Rig could do serious damage in a collision to a small, 3,000-pound compact car.

Curiously, for all my $80K tester's luxury, the adaptive cruise will come to a complete stop at a stoplight—then, um, release after five sedans like my wife's old 2017 Subaru Impreza. Never take for granted these driver-assist systems. Like 1500 Rebel Jr., 2500 Rebel rides on rear coil springs making for a smooth ride with little bed flutter, though the all-terrain tires are predictably noisy compared to all-season offerings.

Continuing the truck's beauty-and-the-beast duality, the brawny, 6.4-liter Hemi V-8 engine is married to a smooth 8-speed transmission. Flattening the throttle onto I-75 at Exit 93, the 8-speed clocked off seamless shifts before I settled back into cruise control at 75 mph.

Dedicated off-roaders will hook the V-8 up to a trailer where the 2500 Rebel's max tow capacity increases from the 1500 Rebel's healthy 11,500 pounds to a spectacular 16,800. That's enough grunt to plan a big weekend with your buddies towing, say, eight Polaris RZRs with seven riding in the trailer—and another stuffed into the bed with its 3,140-pound payload capacity.

Of course, the HD Rebel will want to join in the fun, too.

But like on-road, its girth needs to be respected off-road, too. To support its weight, the Wrangler all-terrains are pumped to 64 PSI. Ideally, I should have bled them down by half to take on the tortures of Holly Oaks' landscape. For my short time around the park, I didn't bother.

That was fine for wide-open throttle donuts on the sandy flats, but the park's muddy slopes required some tiptoeing lest the beast's 7,500 pounds become a runaway avalanche. The HD Rebel has a useful locking rear differential for climbs (patience, it takes a while to connect) but you'll want to pay for the next trim Power Wagon if you want Jeep Rubicon-like, twin-locking differential and front sway bar disconnect. Speaking of Jeeps, 2500 Rebel's ocean-liner length makes for less breakover angle than the last V-8-powered off-roader I piloted at Holly Oaks, the insane Wrangler 392.

The Wrangler takes the same displacement, 6.4-liter Hemi block and squeezes out another 60 horsepower and 40 pound-feet of torque. Floor Jeep's 5,100-pound hellion up a Holly Oaks trail and you'll wake the dead. The HD Rebel was more civilized under my size-15 boot. The Ram's priority is towing off-roaders and their gear to the trail.

To that end, the interior is practical as well as luxurious.

Jeep/Ram leverages its superb UConnect infotainment system across the lineup—including the HD Rebel. In addition to mirroring my phone, it also provided multiple camera views, the forward-facing view proving most useful as I crawled over Holly Oaks' trail peaks. But there are other options like a camera with a 55-foot cord should you want to keep an eye on the inside of your trailer.

The center console can be turned into a middle seat to carry a total of six inside the Crew Cab. Legroom is generous, and the rear seats split 70/30. Folding the right seats exposes a flat floor (complete with cupholder for the remaining left-side passenger) so you can load luggage, coolers and gear if the pickup bed is occupied by a motorbike or RZR.

Beneath all the digital wizardry, stitching and leather thrones is a good ol' rubberized floor. So that when you get home and realize the floor is caked with mud, you can just wash it clean with a hose (ahem, you may need a power washer for the exterior).

Because, come Sunday, you'll want to throw a coupe of golf bags in back and take the Rebel to the golf club to embarrass your buddy's light-duty truck.

STELLANTIS
The 2023 Dodge Ram 2500 Heavy Duty Rebel.

NUTS & BOLTS

- **Vehicle type**: Front-engine, four-wheel-drive, four-door pickup truck
- **Price**: $68,840, including $1,895 destination charge ($77,395 as tested)
- **Powerplant**: 6.4-liter V-8; 6.7-liter, inline-6 cylinder diesel
- **Power**: 410 horsepower, 429 pound-feet torque (V-8); 370 horsepower, 850 pound-feet torque (diesel)
- **Transmission**: Eight-speed automatic (V-8); six-speed automatic (diesel)
- **Performance**: 0-60 mph, 7.5 seconds (Car and Driver est.); Towing, 16,800 pounds (V-8); 3,140-pound payload
- **Weight**: 7,500 pounds est. (V-8 as tested)
- **Fuel economy**: EPA est. NA; Fuel economy observed while thrashing to Holly Oaks and back: 9 mpg
- **Report card**
- **Highs**: Looks awesome inside and out; tenacious towing
- **Lows**: Ginormous size…and price tag
- **Overall**: 4 stars

Quick clean or expensive fix?

MOTORMOUTH
BY BOB WEBER
Tribune News Service

Bob Weber is a writer and mechanic who became an ASE-certified Master Automobile Technician in 1976. Weber's work has appeared in professional trade magazines and various consumer publications including Consumer Guide *and* Consumers Digest. *Send questions along with name and town to motormouth.tribune@gmail.com.*

Q: I have a dilemma. A month ago, before taking a 2,600-mile road trip, some of the yellow lights came on on my dashboard. One was the LDW signal that said system failure. I took my 2016 Honda Odyssey to the dealer. The first gentleman said he saw a lot of pine sap on my car, perhaps it was confusing the camera. He had the car washed and it was good to go. The next morning the yellow lights appeared again. I returned to the dealer. They put it on their machine and it read out that I needed a new control box but it was not in stock. I had to pay $745 for them to order it. We went on our trip, the yellow lights did not appear again. About a week after returning home it started all over again. I did some research on my own. I cleaned the camera on the rear-view mirror, cleaned the window inside and out, and the yellow warning lights have not reappeared. What is your opinion? Do I really need to replace this box or was the first gentleman correct when he said it was a dirty window?

D.S., Arlington Hts., Illinois

A: I think that the first guy was probably right. My philosophy is to do the easy stuff first. That would be to clean everything that may be impacting the camara's view. Control boxes seldom fail; they don't keep them in stock. Check your owner's manual for instructions to turn off the lane departure warning (LDW) and then turn it back on. This may reset the warning light.

■■■

Q: I have a 2019 Toyota Highlander with 22,000 miles. A key fob battery-replacement warning on the display has twice led me to undertake this task since purchasing the car. Each time I have checked both the in-use battery and a fresh one with DC voltage meters (I have 2). Same results: New 3.3 volts, Used 2.9 volts. Your opinion please.

C.M., Deerfield, Illinois

A: Open circuit voltage isn't always a true sign of a battery's energy. Even a reading of 3.0 volts can mean the battery has only about 10% life remaining, At 2.9 volts, your car will surely let you know. But I must ask where you are buying your batteries. If it's online and you are selecting bargain batteries, you may be getting crappy batteries. Buy a name brand from a reputable store. I bet it will last 2-3 years. Did you know that you can start your engine even if your fob battery is dead?

■■■

Q: I had to replace the five-plus-year-old battery in a 2009 Chevrolet Impala LS because it would not hold a charge after the engine had been turned off. The car runs fine with the new battery, but the alternator is putting out 14.7 to 14.9 volts. Is this an acceptable voltage or will it diminish the life of the new battery? Should I replace the alternator, which costs about twice as much as a new battery? I have always thought that the voltage output of a good alternator should be 13.5 to 14.6 volts.

P.S., Frankfort, Illinois

A: You are right regarding the normal alternator output. If your vehicle has an amperage gauge, it will normally hover around 14.2 volts. If an alternator is producing more than 14.5 volts, it is overcharging and can damage the battery. Many parts retailers can run an alternator test, usually for free. Before buying a new alternator, have yours analyzed.

Life & Style

Taylor Swift's 'The Eras Tour' dances to No. 1 at the box office

By LINDSEY BAHR
AP FILM WRITER

Movie theaters turned into concert venues this weekend as Swifties brought their dance moves and friendship bracelets to multiplexes across the country. The unparalleled enthusiasm helped propel "Taylor Swift: The Eras Tour" to a massive, first place debut between $95 million and $97 million in North America, AMC Theatres said Sunday.

It's easily the biggest opening for a concert film of all time, and, not accounting for inflation, has made more than the $73 million "Justin Bieber: Never Say Never" earned in 2011. In today's dollars, that would be around $102 million. And if it comes in on the higher end of projections when totals are released Monday, it could be the biggest October opening ever. The one to beat is "Joker," which launched to $96.2 million in 2019.

A unique experiment in distribution, premium pricing, star power and loose movie theater etiquette—more dancing and shouting than a Star Wars premiere—have made it an undeniable hit. Compiled from Swift's summer shows at Southern California's SoFi Stadium, the film opened in 3,855 North American locations starting with "surprise" Thursday evening previews. Those showtimes helped boost its opening day sum to $39 million – the second biggest ever for October, behind "Joker's" $39.3 million.

Internationally, it's estimated to have earned somewhere between $31 to $33 million, bringing its global total in the range of $126 million to $130 million.

AP

Taylor Swift arrives at the world premiere of the concert film "Taylor Swift: The Eras Tour" on Wednesday, Oct. 11, 2023, at AMC The Grove 14 in Los Angeles.

"This is a phenomenal number," said Paul Dergarabedian, the senior media analyst for Comscore. "To have a blockbuster style opening weekend for a concert film is unprecedented."

Swift, who produced the film, went around the Hollywood studio system to distribute the film, making a deal directly with AMC, the largest exhibition company in the United States. With her 274 million Instagram followers, Swift hardly needed a traditional marketing campaign to get the word out.

Beyoncé made a similar deal with the exhibitor for " Renaissance: A Film By Beyoncé, " which will open on Dec. 1. The two superstars posed together at the premiere of "The Eras Tour" earlier this week in Los Angeles. It was a needed injection of star power with Hollywood actors over 90 days into a strike that has left most red carpets void of glamourous talent and resulted in several high-profile films being pushed to next year.

- "Taylor Swift: The Eras Tour," $95 to $97 million.
- "The Exorcist: Believer," $11 million.
- "Paw Patrol: The Mighty Movie," $7 million.
- "Saw X," $5.7 million.
- "The Creator," $4.3 million.
- "A Haunting in Venice," $2.1 million.
- The Blind," $2 million.
- The Nun II," $1.6 million.
- The Equalizer 3," $960,000.
- "Dumb Money," $920,000.

OBITUARIES

Suzanne Somers, of 'Three's Company,' dies at 76

Suzanne Somers, the effervescent blonde actor known for playing Chrissy Snow on the television show "Three's Company" and who became an entrepreneur and New York Times best-selling author, has died. She was 76. Somers had breast cancer for over 23 years and died Sunday morning, her family said in a statement provided by her longtime publicist, R. Couri Hay. Her husband Alan Hamel, her son Bruce and other immediate family were with her in Palm Springs, California. "Her family was gathered to celebrate her 77th birthday on October 16th," the statement read. "Instead, they will celebrate her extraordinary life, and want to thank her millions of fans and followers who loved her dearly." In July, Somers shared on Instagram that her breast cancer had returned. ***(AP)***

Piper Laurie, 3-time Oscar nominee with film credits such as 'The Hustler' and 'Carrie,' dies at 91

Piper Laurie, the strong-willed, Oscar-nominated actor who performed in acclaimed roles despite at one point abandoning acting altogether in search of a "more meaningful" life, died early Saturday at her home in Los Angeles. She was 91. Laurie died of old age, her manager, Marion Rosenberg, told The Associated Press via email, adding that she was "a superb talent and a wonderful human being." Laurie arrived in Hollywood in 1949 as Rosetta Jacobs and was quickly given a contract with Universal-International, a new name that she hated and a string of starring roles with Ronald Reagan, Rock Hudson and Tony Curtis, among others. She went on to receive Academy Award nominations for three distinct films: The 1961 poolroom drama "The Hustler"; the film version of Stephen King's horror classic "Carrie," in 1976; and the romantic drama "Children of a Lesser God," in 1986. She also appeared in several acclaimed roles on television and the stage, including in David Lynch's "Twin Peaks" in the 1990s as the villainous Catherine Martell. ***(AP)***

Mark Goddard, who played Don West on 'Lost in Space,' dies at 87

Mark Goddard, an actor best known for playing Major Don West in the 1960s television show "Lost in Space," has died. He was 87. He died Tuesday in Hingham, Massachusetts, of pulmonary fibrosis, his son told John The New York Times. Bill Mumy, who played Will Robinson on "Lost In Space," wrote a tribute to his "beloved friend and brother" for 59 years on Facebook. Goddard is survived by his wife Evelyn Pezzulich and children. ***(AP)***

Stephen Rubin, publisher of 'The Da Vinci Code' and other blockbusters, dies at 81

NEW YORK (AP)—Stephen Rubin, a longtime publishing executive with an eye for bestsellers and a passion for music and public life who helped launched the career of John Grisham, among others, and released such blockbusters as "The Da Vinci Code" and "Fire and Fury," has died. He was 81. Rubin died Friday at a hospital in Manhattan after "a brief and sudden illness," according to his nephew, David Rotter. Book publishing is hard to imagine without the raspy-voiced Rubin, a powerful and colorful presence for decades with his tortoiseshell glasses, stylish suits and wide range of friends and colleagues, from Jacqueline Kennedy to Beverly Sills. He hosted memorable parties at his spacious West Side apartment and was a prime source of gossip and alternately profane and loving assessments of friends, colleagues and the greater world.

Boy's bad behavior hobbles collective parenting effort

DEAR ABBY: My wife and I are raising our two daughters (6 and 7) alongside my sister and her son (10). My sister and her baby daddy separated before their child's birth because he was physically and emotionally abusive. However, the law allows him to still be in the boy's life.

I love my sister and my nephew, which is why we are raising our families as a village. The problem is, we are seeing similar characteristics in my nephew's behavior toward our daughters. He's manipulative and a little "overly familiar" toward my eldest daughter. She looks up to him, and he uses it to get her to do what he wants.

Now my 7-year-old is emotionally abusing and ostracizing my 6-year-old. I'm torn because my gut tells me to move and get my girls away from my nephew, but he, too, is a child, and I want to continue to support him so he can grow into a decent man. However, I am not willing to sacrifice my girls for his potential. What to do?

CAUTIOUS MOM/AUNTIE

DEAR MOM/AUNTIE: Your children must come before your sister's son. Because your older daughter is now modeling her cousin's misbehavior and acting out against her little sister, it's time to discourage that behavior and limit, if not sever, the contact she has with her cousin before it creates lasting damage. You cannot save everyone. It is your duty to protect your daughters from any negative influence.

■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: My son and his wife are renting a property from me and my husband at a very reasonable rate in today's not-so-reasonable world. We recently found out they got a cat, even though the lease they signed clearly states no pets are allowed.

My son said we are taking this personally instead of approaching this as landlords. How can we NOT take this personally? He and his new wife have broken our trust. The ironic thing is, if we approached this only as landlords, we would evict them immediately.

What can we say to get them to understand how hurt we are without ruining the relationship? They are expecting a baby soon. We have already gotten the "sorry, not sorry" text. This is tearing us up as parents.

RULES ARE RULES IN PENNSYLVANIA

DEAR RULES: Tell your son you feel disrespected because he adopted a cat without clearing it with you. Although he may have said he wants you to act like the landlord you are, as a tenant, he is in violation of the terms of the lease he signed.

DEAR ABBY

By Abigail Van Buren
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Whether or not you decide to give him and his wife an exception for their cat and allow them to keep the animal, PLEASE refer him to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website (CDC.gov). Precautions must be taken by pregnant cat owners in order to avoid contracting toxoplasmosis, a parasitic infection, which can be passed to a fetus during pregnancy.

■ ■ ■

To receive a collection of Abby's most memorable – and most frequently requested – poems and essays, send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby – Keepers Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

SEE ?? SEE ?! I DID HANG UP MY COAT. IT'S RIGHT THERE, JUST LIKE I SAID!
I WAS RIGHT AND YOU WERE WRONG.
OK, OK, I'M SORRY. FORGIVE ME.
HEH HEH HEH!
ANOTHER TALLY MARK FOR TODAY.
YOU DON'T NEED TO KEEP SCORE!

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

Adam@Home

By Bryan Basset

SO YOU'RE A VAMPIRE THIS YEAR? THAT'S YOUR SHTICK?
YESSS. ZE SUN'S RAYS, ZEY BURN VLAD'S FLESH. 'TIS MISERY.
YEAH. THAT SOUNDS ROUGH.
HOWEVER, VLAD WOULD LIKE MORE FROSTED LOOPIES.
CAN VLAD SAY PLEASE?

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy

SO, SOMETHING I'VE BEEN ASKING ALL MY DATES... YOU'RE NOT A FRIEND OF TAYLOR SWIFT, ARE YA?
WHY IN THE WORLD WOULD YOU ASK THAT?
BECAUSE IF WE START DATING AND BREAK UP, I DON'T WANT YOU HAVING HER WRITE ONE OF HER DUMB SONGS ABOUT ME.

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

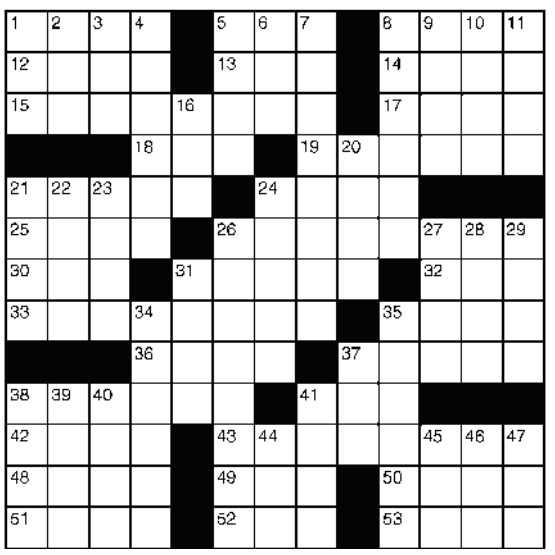
ACROSS
1 Slightly wet
5 Conclude
8 Gas container
12 Draft status
13 "O Sole —"
14 "The Good Earth" heroine
15 Sleepy Hollow rider
17 Stallion's mate
18 Sample
19 Stupor
21 Iraqi port city
24 "SNL" segment
25 Unique
26 Work force
30 Egg salad — roll (deli order)
31 Western lilies
32 Wall St. debut
33 Buzzing carpenter's tool
35 Skewer
36 Historic flag maker
37 Hardwood tree
38 Reluctant
41 — Juan
42 Slimming surgery, briefly
43 Woodcutter's aid
48 Dutch word for "farmer"
49 Hollywood's Thurman
50 "Sleepless in Seattle" actress Wilson
51 Pub orders
52 Salary
53 Rights org. since 1920

DOWN
1 Homer's lament
2 Year in Mexico
3 Debussy's "La —"
4 Bakery treat
5 TV trophy
6 Long of "Soul Food"
7 "No clue!"
8 Salsa ingredient
9 Astronaut Shepard
10 Dealer's foe
11 Leg joint
16 Notable time
20 Splits
21 Animated Betty
22 — Domini
23 Cabbage salad
24 Heroic tales
26 Bungles
27 Use a sponge
28 Grand tale
29 IRA type
31 "No seats" signs
34 Goofs
35 Madrid matron
37 "Humbug!"
38 Goya's duchess
39 Old stringed instrument
40 Duel tool
41 Vacillate
44 Docs' bloc
45 Rock's Ocasek
46 Cardinal cap letters
47 Vichy water

Solution time: 22 mins.

J	A	G			A	L	P	H	A		W	A	H
A	C	E			R	I	S	E	S		A	L	A
W	H	O	L	E	M	I	L	K		I	M	I
			A	N	I		I	I	N	F	A	R
S	O	W	H	A	T		O	N	O	R		
E	P	A			S	E	T		G	U	M	B	Y
R	I	F	F		D	E	S		S	A	N	E
B	E	F	O	G		A	C	A		I	A	N
		L	A	R	S		A	L	A	N	I	S
O	C	E	L	O	T		M	L	A			
R	A	M			W	A	X	M	U	S	E	U	M
E	M	I			L	I	V	E	D		S	K	I
M	E	X			S	N	I	D	E		P	E	N

Yesterday's answer 10-17



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Felicity Jones, 40; Eminem, 51; Rob Marshall, 63; Alan Jackson, 65.

Happy Birthday: Direct your attention to what you can do to improve your life. Focus on bringing in more cash or surrounding yourself with the people and possessions that bring you joy. Take control, implement change and be the one to reach out and help those who cannot help themselves. Put your energy where it counts, and your hard work will gain momentum and accolades. Your numbers are 3, 14, 21, 25, 33, 42, 49.

ARIES *(March 21-April 19):* Let your imagination guide you. Consider your skills, and modify what you enjoy doing and fit it into your daily routine. The knowledge you gain from observing people doing something you want to pursue will help you move forward. ✪✪✪✪✪

TAURUS *(April 20-May 20):* Simplify your life, walk away from what you cannot control and put your energy into what matters most to you. Partner with someone who shares your concerns, and do your best to win meaningful battles. Self-improvement, love and romance are favored. ✪✪✪

GEMINI *(May 21-June 20):* Mix business with pleasure. Network and talk to experts. The information you receive will help you further your interests so you are not taken advantage of by someone who wants to exploit you. Forward-thinking is the path to new beginnings. ✪✪✪

CANCER *(June 21-July 22):* Make the effort to fulfill your promises to yourself and others. Talk less and do more. Actions speak louder than words. What you accomplish today will make a difference in how others view you and how you feel about yourself. Take a walk in a new direction. ✪✪✪

LEO *(July 23-Aug. 22):* Stick to your plans, regardless of what others do. Use your connections and intelligence to build momentum to push you in a direction that offers something that excites you. Let go of what no longer works and replace it with what makes you happy. ✪✪

VIRGO *(Aug. 23-Sept. 22):* Take a deep breath, stay calm and put your energy where it counts. Look for the joy in everything you pursue and make the most out of every situation. Attitude will make a difference in the outcome today. Smile and be positive. ✪✪✪✪

LIBRA *(Sept. 23-Oct. 22):* Take the initiative to get things done and live up to your promises. Do whatever it takes to keep the peace and bring about the changes others expect of you. Personal improvement, routine and expanding your skills and knowledge are favored. ✪✪✪

SCORPIO *(Oct. 23-Nov. 21):* Organize your life and surroundings. Adding comfort and convenience will encourage you to get involved in something you want to pursue. The connections you make will inspire you to change what isn't working for you and replace it with something tangible. ✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS *(Nov. 22-Dec. 21):* Question what others ask you to do and stay true to yourself. Someone will take advantage of your kindness and generosity if you let them. Practice saying no and offer suggestions and alternatives that don't infringe on your time or cost money. ✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN *(Dec. 22-Jan. 19):* Rely on facts, not hearsay. Someone will be eager to feed you false information if you are gullible. Question everything and get the points straight before you decide. Think and do for yourself; you'll be happy with the results. Personal improvements are favored. ✪✪✪✪

AQUARIUS *(Jan. 20-Feb. 18):* Claim what belongs to you and keep moving forward. Refuse to let anger rear its ugly head and lead you down a path full of tension and anguish instead of optimism and hope. Change what's necessary and beneficial to you. ✪✪

PISCES *(Feb. 19-March 20):* Keep your emotions in check and stick to the truth. Don't limit what you can do because you didn't go through the proper channels. Take care of unfinished business and doors will open that help you get ahead. Choose to be around supportive people. ✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are original, persistent and astute. You are unpredictable and productive.

✪: Avoid conflicts; work behind the scenes. ✪✪: You can accomplish, but don't rely on others. ✪✪✪: Focus and you'll reach your goals. ✪✪✪✪: Aim high; start new projects. ✪✪✪✪✪: Nothing can stop you; go for gold.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

8				6		9	1	
	7	5	9	1	2	8	6	
				4		7		2
6	8		5		1	4		9
				9		6		1
		2			6			5
7	3		1		4	5		
				8			4	
4		8	6		9			7

Difficulty: ★★ 10/17

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's Answer

6	9	1	4	5	3	7	2	8
2	7	4	1	8	9	3	6	5
8	3	5	2	7	6	4	1	9
4	2	7	5	9	1	8	3	6
1	6	9	7	3	8	5	4	2
3	5	8	6	2	4	1	9	7
5	4	3	8	6	2	9	7	1
9	8	2	3	1	7	6	5	4
7	1	6	9	4	5	2	8	3

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the WONDERWORD.

WHAT'S BEING DELIVERED TODAY? Solution: 8 letters

S	U	P	P	L	Y	E	L	A	S	F	A	S	T	N
T	T	S	E	T	O	N	T	S	B	S	E	I	E	F
O	O	O	E	T	D	I	E	S	E	I	A	I	E	R
L	T	F	R	I	M	R	H	G	T	W	G	O	R	O
S	A	S	A	E	D	I	R	I	C	E	R	B	G	N
S	S	P	O	D	P	A	S	H	C	D	E	P	O	T
E	M	C	A	P	H	S	E	N	E	G	R	A	L	X
L	E	A	E	C	E	C	E	R	O	D	N	E	V	F
T	T	R	U	C	K	I	Ⓣ	P	R	L	I	U	E	Y
C	I	T	E	O	N	A	A	Ⓢ	I	U	D	N	E	A
A	E	N	U	E	Y	Y	G	A	Ⓞ	A	R	P	N	D
T	S	T	V	V	M	A	T	E	Y	Ⓒ	I	A	I	T
N	U	N	A	E	B	E	F	S	S	D	V	C	L	X
O	O	E	N	F	R	E	I	G	H	T	E	K	N	E
C	H	T	R	E	L	A	L	O	C	A	T	I	O	N

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Address, Alert, Bags, Big Box, Cart, Charges, Checkout, Contactless, Convenience, Cost, Days, Depot, Drive, Fast, Freight, Front, Greet, Heavy, House, Items, Large, Lift Gate, Location, Necessities, Next Day, Notes, Online, Order, Packages, Paid, Payment, Post, Retail, Rural, Safety, Sale, Shipper, Slots, Store, Supply, Time, Truck, Unpack, Vendor, Wait

Yesterday's Answer: Jet Setter

To purchase THE COLLECTED WONDERWORD, Volumes 56 through 75, order online at www.WonderWordBooks.com. (In Canada, call 1-855-232-2367)

Eagles, 49ers no longer unbeaten; Jets top Philly, Browns stop Niners

AP

New York Jets' Tony Adams, right, runs with the ball after an interception during the second half of an NFL football game against the Philadelphia Eagles, Sunday, Oct. 15, 2023, in East Rutherford, N.J.

EAST RUTHERFORD, N.J. (AP)—Breece Hall ran for an 8-yard touchdown with 1:46 remaining, one play after Tony Adams intercepted Jalen Hurts, and New York held on to shock previously undefeated Philadelphia 20-14 on Sunday for the Jets first win against the Eagles.

The Jets (3-3) appeared on their way to falling to 0-13 in their history against the Eagles, but Hurts' third interception of the game — and the fourth turnover by Philadelphia — was returned by Adams 45 yards to put New York into immediate scoring position.

Hall's run shook MetLife Stadium as the Jets fans went wild, then Zach Wilson connected with Randall Cobb on a 2-point conversion.

The Eagles (5-1) got one more chance to win when they got the ball back, but the defense stiffened — as it had all game. Hurts' deep throw to DeVonta Smith on fourth down was knocked away, and Wilson and the offense were able to kneel down twice to seal an unlikely victory.

Hurts finished 28 of 45 for 280 yards and one touchdown but had three picks against a Jets defense that was missing starting cornerbacks Sauce Gardner and D.J. Reed.

Wilson was 19 of 33 for 186 yards and no touchdowns, but also had no turnovers — and the defense kept the Jets in it. Greg Zuerlein kicked four field goals, a week after booting five. Adams, Bryce Hall and Quinnen Williams each had interceptions, and Quincy Williams recovered a fumble by D'Andre Swift.

BROWNS 19, 49ERS 17

CLEVELAND (AP)—Rookie Jake Moody missed a 41-yard field goal with six seconds left, leaving San Francisco stunned by Cleveland, which ended the Niners regular-season winning streak at 15 and handed quarterback Brock Purdy his first loss as an NFL starter.

Dustin Hopkins kicked four field goals for the Browns (3-2)—the last with 1:40 left, capping a drive helped by a disputed unnecessary roughness call against San Francisco (5-1). Cleveland pulled off the league's biggest upset this season without quarterback Deshaun Watson, who missed his second straight game with a bruised right shoulder.

The 49ers were short-handed without playmakers Christian McCaffrey and Deebo Samuel, who went out with injuries.

P.J. Walker came off Cleveland's practice squad and outplayed Purdy, who had won his first 10 starts.

BILLS 14, GIANTS 9

ORCHARD PARK, N.Y. (AP)—Josh Allen patiently oversaw two lengthy second-half scoring drives, capped by a 15-yard touchdown pass to Quinton Morris with 3:58 remaining, and Buffalo sent undermanned but gritty New York to its fourth straight loss.

Giants quarterback Tyrod Taylor's pass into the end zone glanced off Darren Waller's finger tips facing first-and-goal from the 1. New York got an extra chance after linebacker Terrel Bernard was flagged for defensive interference on a pass intended for Waller as time expired on third-and-5 from Buffalo's 10

The Bills (4-2) hung on, but barely, in outing they overcame being shut out in the first half of a game for the first time since a mean-nothing 2019 season finale. Buffalo overcame two first-half turnovers—receiver Gabe Davis' lost fumble and an Allen interception—which led to the Giants (1-5) pulling ahead on Graham Gano hitting 29- and 43-yard field goals.

Taylor, who went 22-20 from 2015-17 with Buffalo,was making his first start since December 2021, when he played for Houston. He went 24 for 36 for 200 yards.

Allen went 19 of 30 for 169 with two touchdown passes and an interception.

JAGUARS 37, COLTS 20

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. (AP)—Trevor Lawrence threw two touchdown passes, Travis Etienne ran for a pair of scores as Jacksonville won its third straight and sent Indianapolis to its ninth straight road loss in the series.

The Jaguars (4-2) had their most lopsided victory of the season and this one was essentially over in the third quarter when Lawrence connected threw a 10-yard strike to rookie tight end Brenton Strange and put Jacksonville ahead 31-6. Lawrence also found Christian Kirk for a 29-yard TD in the second. Etienne scored on runs of 2 and 22 yards, also in the second.

The Colts (3-3) started Gardner Minshew in place of injured rookie Anthony Richardson. A sixth-round draft pick by the Jags in 2019, Minshew fumbled once and threw three interceptions.

Etienne gained 55 yards on 18 carries. Lawrence completed 20 of

TEXANS 20, SAINTS 13

HOUSTON (AP)—Rookie C.J. Stroud threw for 199 yards and two touchdowns and Houston got two defensive stops late seal the win over New Orleans and match the team's win total of last season.

The Saints (3-3) trailed by 7 when Derek Carr threw a 51-yard pass to Rashid Shaheed to get them to the Houston 35. Five consecutive runs by Alvin Kamara got them to the 14. But Carr's pass to Kamara on fourth-and-4 was short, giving Houston the ball with 4½ minutes left.

Houston (3-3) couldn't move the ball after that and punted it back. New Orleans got to the Houston 24 on the next drive, but Carr's throw on fourth-and-10 was intercepted by Steven Nelson with 21 seconds left to secure the win.

VIKINGS 19, BEARS 13

CHICAGO (AP)—Kirk Cousins threw for a touchdown, Jordan Hicks returned a fumble 42 yards for a score and Minnesota knocked Justin Fields out of the game in beating Chicago (1-5).

The Vikings (2-4) made just enough plays without injured star receiver Justin Jefferson and won for the second time in three games. Cousins completed 21 of 31 passes for 181 yards. T.J. Hockenson caught six passes for 50 yards.

Fields was sacked four times and exited with a right hand injury early in the third quarter. He finished 6 of 10 for 58 yards and an interception.

DOLPHINS 42, PANTHERS 21

MIAMI (AP)—Tua Tagovailoa threw three touchdown passes to three different receivers as Miami rallied for the win and sent winless Carolina to its sixth straight loss.

Tagovailoa was 21 of 31 for 262 yards and has an NFL-leading 1,876 yards passing this season.

After trailing 14-0 early, Tyreek Hill put the Dolphins ahead with a 41-yard touchdown catch late in the second quarter. Hill caught six passes for 163 yards to bring his NFL-leading season total to 814 yards receiving. Jaylen Waddle added 51 yards on seven catches.

Miami (5-1) scored 35 straight points before Mike White replaced Tagovailoa with about four minutes left and threw an interception that was returned by cornerback Troy Hill for a touchdown.

Bryce Young finished 23 of 38 with 217 yards and was sacked four times for the Panthers (0-6).

COMMANDERS 24, FALCONS 16

ATLANTA (AP)—Sam Howell threw three short passes for touchdowns and Washington intercepted Desmond Ridder three times in a win over Atlanta that ended a three-game skid.

Coming off a 40-20 home loss to the lowly Chicago Bears, the Commanders (3-3) redeemed themselves a bit against the Falcons (3-3).

Howell shook off five more sacks — he's been dumped 34 times this season — to complete 14 of 23 passes for 151 yards. The Commanders (3-3), who showed more balance and ran for 72 yards, was led by their defense.

Kendall Fuller, Benjamin St-Juste and Jamin Davis had picks for Washington.

BENGALS 17, SEAHAWKS 13

CINCINNATI (AP)—Joe Burrow threw two early touchdown passes and Cincinnati intercepted Geno Smith twice in the second half, holding off Seattle for its second straight victory.

Burrow was 24 for 35 for 185 yards and an interception as the Bengals improved to 3-3 ahead of their bye week.

Cincinnati scored touchdowns on its first two possessions, but punted six times, giving Seattle the late chances.

The Bengals defense stopped Seattle in the red zone twice late to seal the win, the last time when Smith was hit by B.J. Hill and threw incomplete on fourth-and-8 on the Bengals 9 in the final minute.

RAVENS 24, TITANS 16

LONDON (AP)—Lamar Jackson threw a touchdown pass and Justin Tucker kicked six field goals in Baltimore's win over Tennessee at Tottenham Hotspur Stadium.

Jackson mostly shined in his international debut, but Tucker stole the spotlight by going 6 for 6, with the longest just 41 yards. Jackson was 21 of 30 for 223 yards and he led the team with 62 yards on the ground.

The Ravens (4-2) got plenty of chunk plays on offense and a 70-yard punt return by Devin Duvernay, but several of their drives stalled deep in Tennessee territory. Rookie receiver Zay Flowers scored his first NFL TD.

Tennessee (2-4) quarterback Ryan Tannehill limped off after the third quarter, replaced by Malik Willis. Tannehill, who was moving gingerly after a hit from Justin Madubuike in third quarter, finished 8 of 16 for 76 yards. Willis was 4 for 5 for 74 yards.

RAMS 26, CARDINALS 9

INGLEWOOD, Calif. (AP)—Cooper Kupp made seven receptions for 148 yards and his first touchdown of the season, and Kyren Williams rushed for a career-high 158 yards and a TD as Los Angeles beat Arizona for its first home victory of the season.

Matthew Stafford passed for 226 yards for the Rams (3-3), who scored 23 unanswered points and shut out their NFC West rivals in the second half.

Record-setting rookie Puka Nacua had only four catches for 26 yards, but Los Angeles' offense got rolling after halftime behind a vintage effort from Kupp and a breakout game for Williams, who produced the Rams' best rushing performance in nearly three years.

LIONS 20, BUCCANEERS 6

TAMPA, Fla. (AP—Jared Goff threw for 353 yards and two touchdowns and NFC North-leading Detroit Lions beat sputtering Tampa Bay.

The streaking Lions won their fourth straight game following an overtime loss to the Seattle Seahawks and are off to a 5-1 start for the first time since 2011.

Goff tossed TD passes of 27 yards to Amon-Ra St. Brown and 45 yards to Jameson William as Detroit won for the seventh time in eight road games dating to last season.

The Lions' defense did its part by intercepting Baker Mayfield once, limiting the Bucs (3-2) to 251 yards of total offense and forcing Tampa Bay to settle for field goals of 33 and 36 yards on its only possessions that ended in Detroit's red zone.

RAIDERS 21, PATRIOTS 17

LAS VEGAS (AP)—Brian Hoyer relieved an injured Jimmy Garoppolo and threw for 102 yards in the second half, and Daniel Carlson made four field goals, helping Las Vegas send struggling New England to its third straight loss.

Garoppolo played the entire first half before being ruled out with a back injury. He completed 14 of 22 passes for 162 yards with a touchdown and interception.

Carlson made field goals of 25, 37, 30 and 24 yards as Las Vegas won back-to-back games to move to .500 at 3-3. This was their Raiders' 500th regular-season victory as a franchise, 10th-best all time.

Patriots coach Bill Belichick remains at 299 career regular-season wins, losing to his former longtime offensive coordinator, Josh McDaniels.

Montgomery shuts out Astros, Taveras homers as Rangers take Game 1

HOUSTON (AP)—Jordan Montgomery outdueled Justin Verlander and the Texas Rangers received a big boost from their youngest player to open the AL Championship Series with a 2-0 win over the Houston Astros on Sunday night.

Montgomery pitched five-hit ball over 6 1/3 innings, Leody Taveras provided a two-run lead with his solo homer in the fifth and the Rangers remained perfect in the postseason at 6-0.

Evan Carter, a rookie who just turned 21 on Aug. 29, doubled and scored in the second and made two nifty defensive plays in left field. He's shined this postseason after not making his major league debut until Sept. 8.

"He just has so much confidence," Texas manager Bruce Bochy said. "He's got the youthful enthusiasm and he's just excited to be here. He's not in awe of anything, just no fear in this kid since he's come up."

AP

Texas Rangers' Jose Leclerc reacts after the final out of Game 1 of the baseball AL Championship Series against the Houston Astros Sunday, Oct. 15, 2023, in Houston.

In the ALCS for the first time since back-to-back appearances in 2010-11, the Rangers swept the Rays in the Wild Card Series and the Orioles in the Division Series. The winning streak followed loses in their previous six playoff games against Toronto in the ALDS in 2015 and 2016.

"We just found a way to get a couple of runs across the board," Bochy said. "That was the difference in the game, obviously. But our guy was really good, Monty, terrific job he did. And he got in a couple of jams there and found a way to get out of it."

Game 2 of the best-of-seven series is Monday in Houston.

The defending champion Astros, in the ALCS for a seventh straight year, had a tough time getting anything going against Montgomery. The top four batters in Houston's lineup were 2 for 12 with five strikeouts against the left-hander. Slugger Yordan Alvarez struck out against him three times.

"Overall, just didn't do enough tonight, offensively," Houston third baseman Alex Bregman said. "I thought J.V. threw the ball tremendously, but we need to string together some better at-bats."

Houston's offensive woes came after it hit 16 homers and outscored the Rangers 39-10 in a three-game sweep in September. Things were much different in the first postseason meeting between these in-state rivals as they managed just five singles.

"Sometime you've got to say: 'Hey, the guy threw a great game tonight against us, excellent game,'" manager Dusty Baker said. "And they say good pitching beats good hitting, but when you don't hit, everybody wants to know what's wrong. There's not a whole bunch to say. He threw a real good game against us."

Montgomery has been great in the last month, allowing just two earned runs over 27 innings in his last four starts of regular season, and posting a 2.08 ERA in three postseason starts.

Verlander allowed two runs and six hits in 6 2/3 innings to mark the first time this postseason where both starters pitched into the seventh. It was the 36th postseason start for Verlander and the MLB-record 14th time he's started a playoff series opener.

The three-time Cy Young Award winner threw 47 fastballs, getting 27 swings without a single swing and miss.

Verlander said the defending champs aren't concerned after falling into an early hole in the series.

"We lost Game 1 in the World Series last year," he said. "We've lost Game 1 of some playoff series before. And that's the great thing about this team. Obviously nobody is sitting in the locker room right now happy. But it's very matter of fact, okay. We just got punched, how do you answer?"

Alvarez stranded two in the third with an inning ending strikeout and Martín Maldonado left the bases loaded when he struck out in the fourth.

Josh Sborz walked Jose Altuve starting the eighth and was replaced by Aroldis Chapman. The Rangers turned a double play when Carter made a great grab on the track on a ball hit by Bregman and Altuve was called out for not retouching second base when he retreated to first after Carter's catch.

Altuve initially called safe, but the Rangers challenged the ruling and it was overturned in a video review. Alvarez following with an inning-ending groundout.

Carter had robbed Bregman of a hit with one out in the first. He sprinted before leaping to make the catch and crashing into the scoreboard wall in left field and knocking out one of squares.

"Oh, my gosh. This is so much fun," Carter said. "That's just all I think about. Where else would I want to be. This is awesome. I'm just trying to keep my feet grounded and just keep rolling with this team . It's been a lot of fun."

Jose Leclerc struck out one in a perfect ninth for the save and the Rangers' second shutout of the playoff. Texas' bullpen has a 1.86 ERA in the playoffs after ranking 24th at 4.77 during the regular season.

Carter got things going for Texas with a hustle double on a grounder with one out in the second before scoring on a single by Jonah Heim. John Jung singled with two outs, Taveras walked to load the bases and Verlander limited the damage by retiring Marcus Semien on a fly ball.

Verlander had retired eight in a row when Taveras drove a hanging slider 398 feet into the seats in right field with one out in the fifth.

"Every one of their guys has the opportunity to beat you," Verlander said. "You've got to be on your game one through nine. And if you're not, they'll make you pay."

Wheeler blossoms into ace for Phillies, gets Game 1 start against Arizona in NLCS

PHILADELPHIA (AP)—Zack Wheeler had a pretty nice—yet injury-hampered—career with the Mets. When he signed a free-agent deal with the Phillies ahead of the 2020 season, Wheeler had never been an All-Star, made a postseason start or pitched 200 innings.

Once a top prospect, Wheeler was no longer necessarily viewed as a difference maker.

He was considered a second-tier pitcher who could eat innings, strike batters out and be a dependable No. 3-type of starter.

These days in Philly, Wheeler almost seems like a bargain as the ace of the reigning NL champs.

Wheeler is the Phillies' most dependable starter as he gets set for Game 1 of the NL Championship Series against Arizona on Monday. An NL Cy Young Award runner-up in 2021, Wheeler has topped 200 innings once, gone over 200 strikeouts twice and won a pair of playoff games over four seasons since he signed a $118 million, five-year contract.

After he missed the 2015 and 2016 seasons following Tommy John surgery, Wheeler has made 90 starts the last three seasons.

"Well," Wheeler said of the expectations heaped on him with his deal, "you have to live up to it, right?"

Not too shabby.

The 33-year-old Wheeler passed on more money (the White Sox reportedly offered $120 million) to sign with the Phillies because of a preference to stay on the East Coast. Wheeler has blossomed into a No. 1 starter because — yes, he's more years removed from elbow surgery — but he's also cleaned up an unnecessary wrinkle in his delivery and mastered the two-seam and four-seam fastball.

"I think the biggest thing for me was getting rid of, I used to curl my wrist," he said. "When I broke it out of my glove, I used to curl my wrist. And that's one more thing that had to catch up before I went to the plate. As soon as I got rid of that, it was night and day."

Bryce Harper, Nick Castellanos, Trea Turner, Kyle Schwarber and the rest of the Phillies sluggers earned the bulk of the credit for a second straight run to the NLCS.

But what team goes anywhere in the postseason without a solid starting staff? Wheeler, Game 2 starter Aaron Nola and Game 3 starter Ranger Suárez have all pitched like aces in seven playoff starts.

Wheeler pitched into the seventh inning in both of his two starts and has struck out 18 and walked one overall. Nola is 2-0, struck out 12, allowed two runs and walked two. Suárez, while filling a different role, walked one so far and the Phillies won both of the lefty's starts.

The Diamondbacks send out 17-game winner Zac Gallen for the Game 1 start. Merrill Kelly, a 12-game winner who tossed 6 1/3 shutout innings in an NLDS win over the Dodgers, goes in Game 2. Late-season surprise Brandon Pfaadt is in line for the Game 3 start.

"I remember when I hit as a pitcher, he was probably the toughest at-bat that I had faced," Gallen said of Wheeler.

STICKING AROUND

Manager Rob Thomson decided during last season's spring training that he would retire at the end of the year after a fulfilling coaching career with the New York Yankees and Phillies.

But when Joe Girardi was fired in June 2022, Thomson was promoted to interim manager. All he did was lead the Phillies to the World Series, earn a two-year contract extension, and now has the Phillies on the cusp of another NL crown.

Retirement in the near future is out the window.

"No chance," he said. "I'm having too much fun right now."

GAME 4 STARTERS

The Phillies had 15-game winner Taijuan Walker and Cristopher Sánchez each throw two innings of a simulated game Sunday, and they remain in contention for a Game 4 start.

With two short series, neither starter has pitched this postseason.

Thomson said the decision could come down to how much they have to use their bullpen over the first three games. Sánchez has extensive experience as a reliever, while Walker, in the first season of a $72 million, four-year deal, has made 194 career starts.

Walker had a rough second half that included a three-start stretch in September where he allowed four, six and five runs.

Thomson said he may not name a starter until after Game 3.

LOUD CROWD

The Diamondbacks insist they're ready for Philly to bring the nose.

The Diamondbacks blasted artificial noise—not unlike what an NFL team would do ahead of a hostile road game — to prepare them for the fired-up, flat-out loud fans at Citizens Bank Park.

The Phillies are 26-11 at home in the postseason since the ballpark opened in 2004, the .703 winning percentage the best all-time of any home team in one stadium (minimum 20 games).

Arizona cranked the noise to get them ready for Games 1 and 2 inside an otherwise empty Chase Field for a scrimmage on Friday. The road, though, hasn't bothered an Arizona team that is 5-0 in the postseason, 4-0 on the road.

"The crowd noise at Chase was a little more treble than bass," said Gallen, a New Jersey native. "It was a little more on the annoying side, which I think honestly might have been beneficial. I think just to kind of simulate outfielders being able to communicate and things like that, just something super loud.

"I haven't been to an environment here like with the Phillies. I've been to an Eagles game when they play Dallas, and that gets pretty loud too, so I imagine it's very similar."

Lillard scores 14 points in Milwaukee debut as Bucks beat Lakers

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Giannis Antetokounmpo scored 16 points, Damian Lillard had 14 in his Milwaukee debut, and the Bucks beat the Los Angeles Lakers 108-97 on Sunday night.

Lillard, part of a three-team blockbuster trade that sent him from Portland to Milwaukee, finished 3-for-10 shooting including 2 for 7 from 3-point range. Lillard's night ended with 4:41 left in the third quarter. He played 22 minutes. Antetokounmpo, who shot 7 for 10, played 15 minutes.

Anthony Davis scored 16 points for Los Angeles in 19 minutes. Davis also had seven rebounds, five assists, two steals and two blocks. LeBron James did not play.

AP

Milwaukee Bucks forward MarJon Beauchamp jumps to keep a ball inbounds as referee Derek Richardson watches during the first half of an NBA preseason basketball game against the Los Angeles Lakers Sunday, Oct. 15, 2023, in Los Angeles.

HORNETS 117, THUNDER 115

P.J. Washington scored 31 points shooting 13 for 18 and Terry Rozier scored 19 and host Charlotte beat Oklahoma City.

LaMelo Ball scored 16 points as the Hornets shot 52.3%.

Jaylin Williams scored 18 points and Aaron Wiggins had 16 for Oklahoma City, which did not play its starters.

RAPTORS 134, TAIPANS 93

Scottie Barnes scored 14 points, and Chris Boucher and Pascal Siakam each had 12 as Toronto beat Australian-based Cairns Taipans.

Javon Freeman-Liberty led the Raptors with 15 points.

Patrick Miller scored 22 points for the Taipans.

HEAT 132, GRIZZLIES 124

Tyler Herro scored 30 points and Bam Adebayo scored 26 points and Miami beat visiting Memphis.

Herro finished 11-for-19 shooting including 4 for 7 from 3-point range. Adebayo was 12 for 20 and blocked four shots. Jimmy Butler didn't play for the Heat.

Desmond Bane scored 26 points and Ziaire Williams had 19 on 7-for-10 shooting for the Grizzlies.

NUGGETS 116, BULLS 102

Rookie Julian Strawther scored 25 points in 25 minutes and Denver beat visiting Chicago as the Bulls rested most of their starters.

Jamal Murray added 21 points and Nikola Jokic scored 15 for Denver, which shot 52.7%.

Coby White and Patrick Williams scored 20 points apiece and Andre Drummond grabbed 10 rebounds for Chicago. Demar DeRozan, Zach LaVine, and Nikola Vucevic did not play for the Bulls.

WARRIORS 121, KINGS 115, OT

Jonathan Kuminga scored 28 points and Andrew Wiggins added 20 as visiting Golden State beat Sacramento in overtime.

Domantas Sabonis scored 19 points and grabbed 11 rebounds and De'Aaron Fox scored 17 for the Kings.

The Warriors rested Steph Curry and Chris Paul. Draymond Green remained out of the lineup with an ankle injury.

Marcus Smart marveling at Grizzlies' defensive mindset

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (AP)—Marcus Smart sees no reason why the Grizzlies can't be the NBA's best defensive team this season.

It's not just bold talk from a brash player. Smart knows exactly why Memphis traded for him in June.

Not only did the Grizzlies rank third in the NBA in defensive rating last season behind the play of Jaren Jackson Jr., the 2023 Defensive Player of the Year, but Smart won that same award in 2022. That makes Memphis the first NBA team to pair back-to-back defensive players of the year since the award was first handed out in 1983.

It has Smart marveling at the possibilities that could be on the horizon.

"As a defensive guy coming on a team who thinks just like you and has guys such as Jaren in the same boat (that) understand the defense and how important it is ... they'll take you to a new level," Smart said.

Even as good as the Grizzlies have been on defense, this is an upgrade.

They traded Dillon Brooks, who was named to the NBA All-Defense second team, to Houston after he wore out his welcome in Memphis. During the offseason, the Grizzlies had a short shopping list to fill the void — headed by Smart and 2011 MVP Derrick Rose.

General manager Zach Kleiman didn't think Boston would part with Smart, the first guard to win NBA Defensive Player of the Year since Gary Payton in 1996.

Smart was an integral contributor to the success of the Celtics, who ranked a spot ahead of Memphis for defensive rating. Smart also is a three-time NBA All-Defensive First Team selection and has won the NBA Hustle Award three times, including last season. The Grizzlies acquired Smart in a three-team trade.

FINAL

From page 20

and winning run from a clutch, two-run jack by Hocog.

Just 4 Fun 22, Saipal 21

In another close game, Just 4 Fun slipped past Saipal, 22-21.

Just 4 Fun had the last laugh as they put up just one more run against Saipal who was leading in the game.

In Just 4 Fun's last at-bat, down by one, 16-17, six runs came in by way of home runs by Tony Salas, Jordan Suel, Rich Salas, P.J. Masaharu, and Jay Kintol, for a 22-17 lead.

Saipal went on to score just four runs and came up short as the third out was made by Jerald Cabrera.

No Excuse 25, PayDayHao 10

Dues were paid as No Excuse defeated PayDayHao, 25-10.

PayDayHao pitcher Juan Iguel was pummeled from the get-go as six runs came in the first inning for No Excuse. Four more runs came in the second inning and PayDayHao was down, 6-10 by the third inning.

The game ended early as No Excuse blew the game wide open with a 14-run third inning by way of multiple home runs and RBI base-hits. Dennis Cabrera Jr., Byron Kaipat, Kimo Angailen, Vince Torres, and Jun Kaipat all hit home runs in that inning.

The game ended when PayDayHao scored just four runs in the last two innings.

The semis are set for this Sunday, Oct. 22, with Just 4 Fun facing off against No Excuse at 10am, and Bat Boys going up against Kebruka at 11am.

LYDIA

From page 20

nament players. "

She added that she didn't really have a bad hole, "but my first nine, 3-4 holes I have 3 putts. If not, my score could have been even better."

"My best hole is hole No. 12 as I had a birdie. From that hole onwards, I [felt] my momentum and timing [was] good. My shot game was on a roll. I'm always a boogie score player," she said.

The club continues to look for new members as the new season continues. For those interested in becoming a member of CWGA or for more information, contact CWGA president Yuko Togawa at 287-9856, vice president Lorraine Babauta at 287-0621, or treasurer Lou Kim at 783-7317.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

CNMI Women's Gold Association players, including last Saturday's tournament winner, Lydia Tan, second from right, pose for a photo at the LaoLao Golf & Resort west course.

JOETEN

From page 20

eten's starting five firing at all cylinders while CHCC rolled on a two-wheel instead of an all-wheel drive.

CHCC's D.J. Ong tried to compensate for the team's lack of vigor, providing cover and defense from all angles he could muster. However, he was still no match for Joeten's leading scorer, Ervin Villarin, along with Jose Torres and Yugie Cruz.

By the end of the first quarter, CHCC was down in the dumps, 26-15. By the third quarter, they were in no-man's land with a big jump by Joeten, 90-59.

Ong handled the ball himself toward the end and collected 32 markers, followed by Jack Lizama's 12, and James Phillips' 10. Joeten, on the other hand, exceeded the 100-point mark with 23 points from Villarin, 16 markers by Torres, 12 from Cruz, 11 points by Alex Lauron, and 10 by Rafael Ordona.

With MarPac's 75-68 win against Office of the Governor, they are now at a perfect 6-0 record.

Both teams came at the ready as they were evenly matched throughout the game. MarPac relied on their starting five, while Office of the Governor threw the whole kitchen sink at them.

There was a changing of the guard in the second quarter as Marpac took the lead from Office of the Governor, 40-34. As Office of the Governor led at the end of the first quarter from free throws and opportunities from within the paint, MarPac did the same and more heading into the third quarter.

It was still anybody's game at the end of the third quarter with a narrow 58-55 lead by MarPac. But, with great ballhandling and accurate shots from downtown and fast-break plays, MarPac's Big 3—Coby Santos, Jeff Castro, and Greg Sablan—established control.

In the end, with Santos' game-high 28 markers, along with Sablan's 23 points, and Castro's 18, they managed to lay waste Office of the Governor's efforts and came away unscathed.

SATURDAY

Joeten 117 – Villarin 23, Torres 16, Y. Cruz 12, Lauron 11, Ordona 10, Manansala 9, Quan 9, Rotap 8, They 6, Sambile 5, Tobias 4, J. Cruz 4.

CHCC 81 – Ong 32, Lizama 12, Phillip 10, Omampo 6, Lisua 6, Castro 5, Ogumoro-Uludong 4, Nunez 4, Yorofalir 2.

Scoring by quarters: 26-15, 59-32, 90-59, 117-81.

THURSDAY

MarPac 75 – Santos 28, G. Sablan 23, Castro 18, Lee 5, H. Sablan 1.

Office of the Governor 68 – Flores 19, Camacho 12, Aranda 9, Kwon 8, Galarse 7, Bahillo 6, T. Pangelinan 4, Diaz 2, Taisague 1.

Scoring by quarters: 15-18, 40-34, 58-55, 75-68.

Eagles, 49ers no longer unbeaten; Jets top Philly, Browns stop Niners.

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Saipan Tribune
Sports

Lillard scores 14 points in Milwaukee debut as Bucks beat Lakers.

PAGE 19

Final Four in BASA slow pitch league set

Aimeliik Bat Boys pose for a photo after their win against Blue Jays in the playoffs of the 2023 Budweiser Belau Amateur Softball Association Slow Pitch Open League at the DanDan Softball Field last Sunday.

LEIGH GASES

Kebruka's Mario Salas lets a pitch fly during their game against Mamaaw in the playoffs of the 2023 Budweiser Belau Amateur Softball Association Slow Pitch Open League at the DanDan Softball Field last Sunday.

By LEIGH GASES
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REPORTER

After a whole season of the 2023 Budweiser Belau Amateur Softball Association Slow Pitch Open League, only four teams remain out of 14.

No. 1 seed Aimeliik Bat Boys clinched the first semifinals spot after bashing the Blue Jays, 17-5.

The Bat Boys made light work of the Blue Jays as the game ended early in the fifth inning. The Blue Jays, however, struck first with Kier Agda's two-run homer in the first inning plus a run after by Paul Salalila, but the Bat Boys had more power.

But in their at-bat, the Bat Boys blew the game wide open after a six-run first inning, for a 6-3 lead. Tyrone Omar started it off with a solo home run, followed by a run by Harry Nakamura, then a grand slam by Irvin Saralu.

The Blue Jays were retired in order in the second inning, then the Bat Boys' Sus Iguel made it 7-3 with a home run. In the next inning, the Blue Jays tried to make a comeback as they scored two runs, but Bat Boys pitcher Iguel shut them down quickly.

The Bat Boys then went on to score six more runs in the third inning to lead, 14-5. The Blue Jays had no more fight in them as they went scoreless in the last couple of innings. Meanwhile, the Bat Boys added three more runs from a home run by Lamarc Iguel and a two-run homer by Nokki Saralu.

Kebruka 21, Mamaaw 20

It was a slugfest between Kebruka and Mamaaw as it was a fight to the finish, with Kebruka coming out on top by just one run, 21-20.

Both teams took turns bringing in runs, with a 6-5 Kebruka lead heading into the second inning.

Pitchers Mario Salasof Kebruka and Mamaaw's Rosek Norita were giving up runs left and right, but it was all a matter of who could score the winning run in the last inning.

Mamaaw added three runs from home runs by I.J. Teigita, Kodik Lifoifoi, and Zack Blas, but Kebruka secured their lead from home runs by Cam Towai, Larson Sibetang, and Gus Hocog, for a 10-8 game.

Kebruka went on to score eight more runs in the game, with Mamaaw trailing behind with three more runs. Mamaaw had an explosion of nine runs in the last inning, but fell short as Kebruka had the last at-bat and scored the tying

See FINAL on Page 19

Joeten wins 2, MarPac still undefeated

By LEIGH GASES
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REPORTER

Joeten won two games in a row, while MarPac is still the pack leaders in the Inaugural R&J Wine & Liquor Inter-Gov't/ Business League 2023 played at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

Joeten's most recent win was a blowout against CHCC, last Saturday, 117-81, and also won in a blowout game versus CPA, 102-84, last Thursday, for a 4-1 record.

A younger and more agile Joeten cagers had CHCC stumped as they zoomed to-and-fro the court at break-neck speed. It wasn't a fair fight with Jo-

See JOETEN on Page 19

LEIGH GASES

Joeten's Ervin Villarin goes up for a layup as he's guarded by CHCC's Jose Tudela during their game in the Inaugural R&J Wine and Liquor Inter-Gov't/Business League 2023 at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium last Saturday.

Lydia Tan tops CWGA tourney

By LEIGH GASES
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REPORTER

Lydia Tan won the CNMI Women's Golf Association monthly tournament last Saturday at the LaoLao Golf & Resort west course.

Tan came back strong after a tough time at the front nine. But Tan came back in the back nine to best seven other players with gross score of 90, handicap of 20, and a net score of 70.

Second place went to Sae Hee Kim with gross score of 84, handicap of 10, and a net score of 74. Third place was Janet Torres with a gross score of 94, handicap of 15, and net score of 79.

When asked how the tournament went, Tan said the "tournament always is hard and tough mentally. Nervousness will come naturally." Even with that, Tan made a great comeback after faltering in the front nine and was surprised she won because "in the group, there [are] strong and seasoned tour-

See LYDIA on Page 19

CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

Lydia Tan won the monthly CNMI Women's Golf Association monthly tournament at the LaoLao Golf & Resort west course last Saturday.